

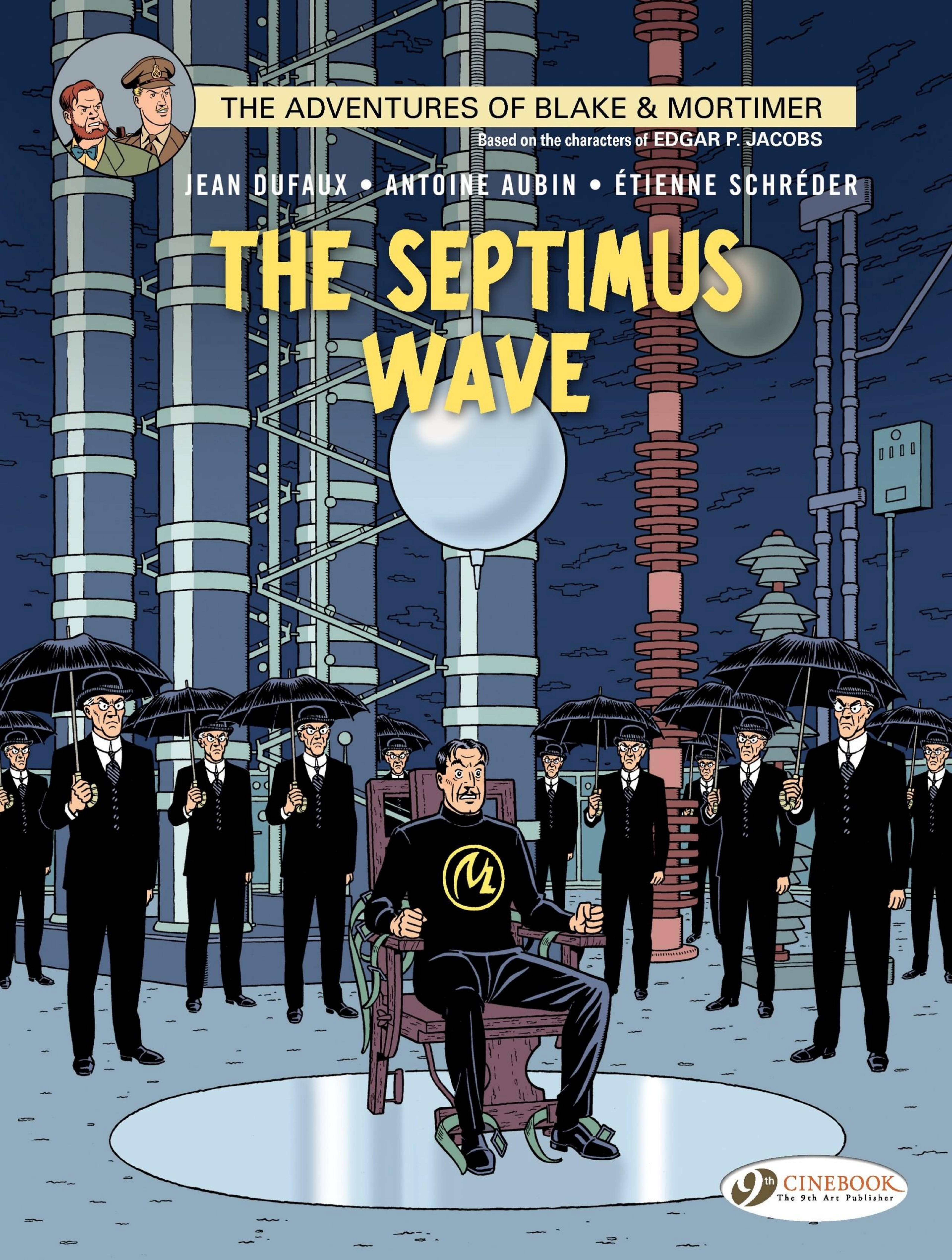


THE ADVENTURES OF BLAKE & MORTIMER

Based on the characters of EDGAR P. JACOBS

JEAN DUFAUX • ANTOINE AUBIN • ÉTIENNE SCHRÉDER

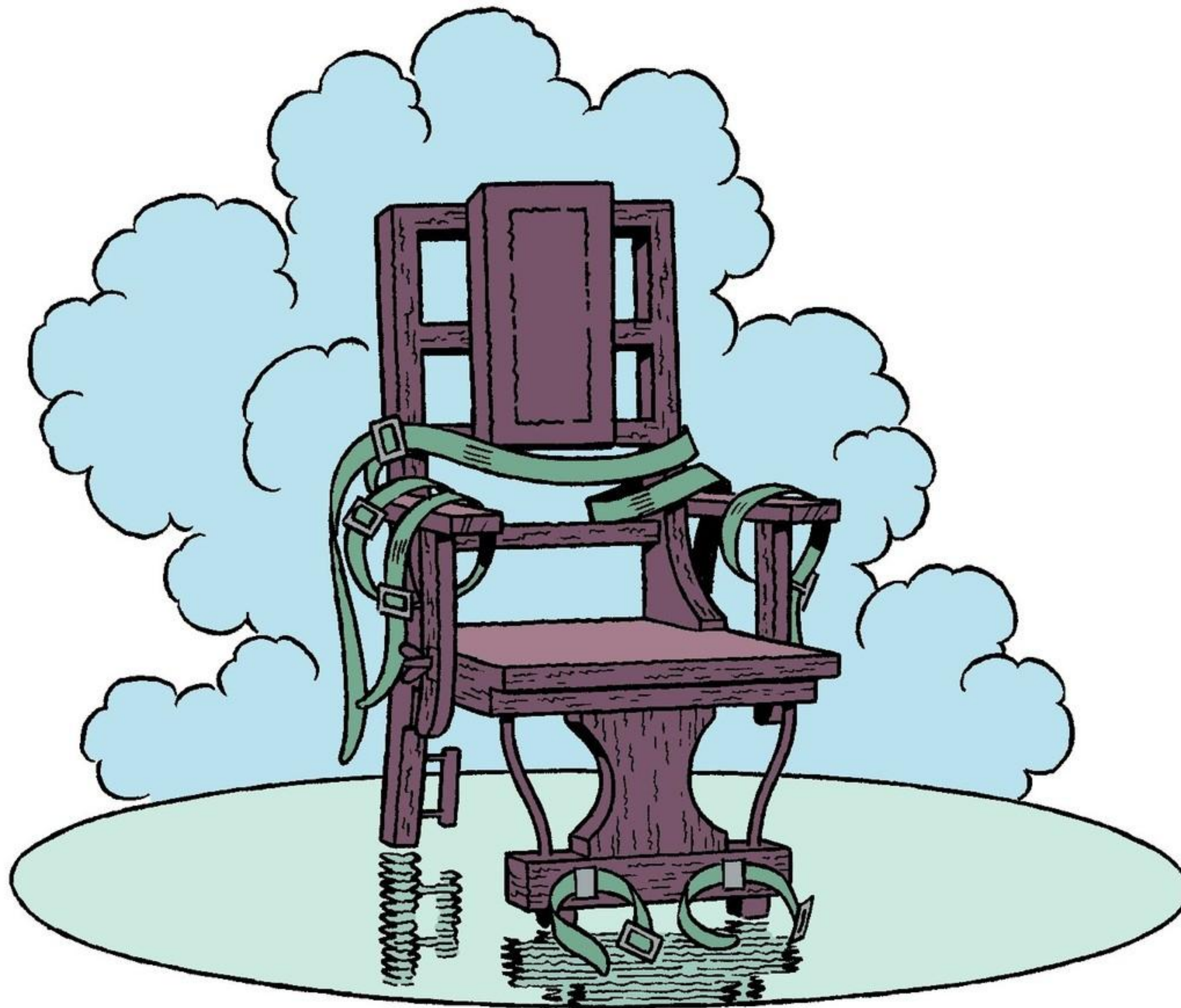
THE SEPTIMUS WAVE



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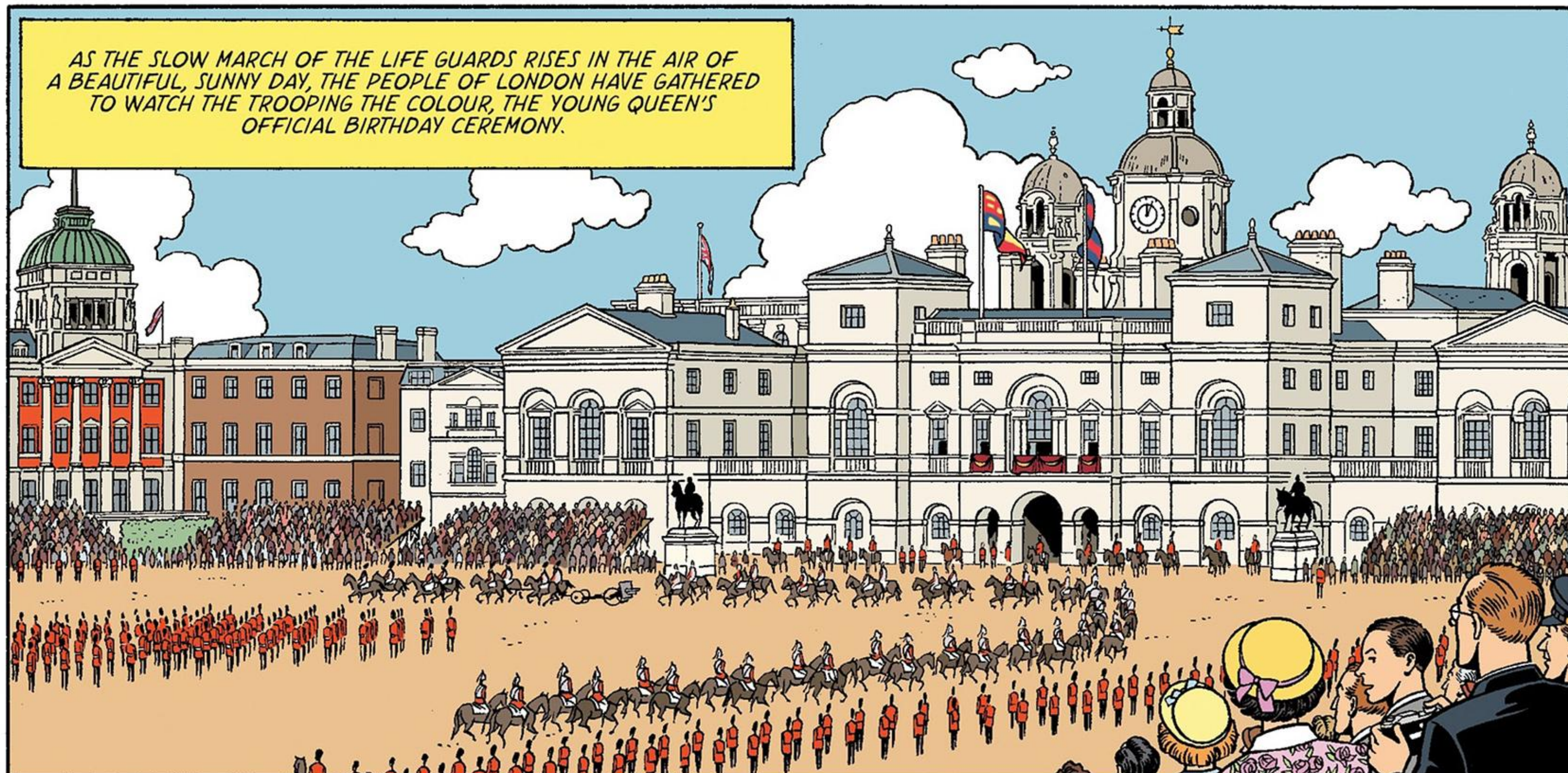
THE SEPTIMUS WAVE

Script: Jean Dufaux • Artwork: Antoine Aubin & Étienne Schréder



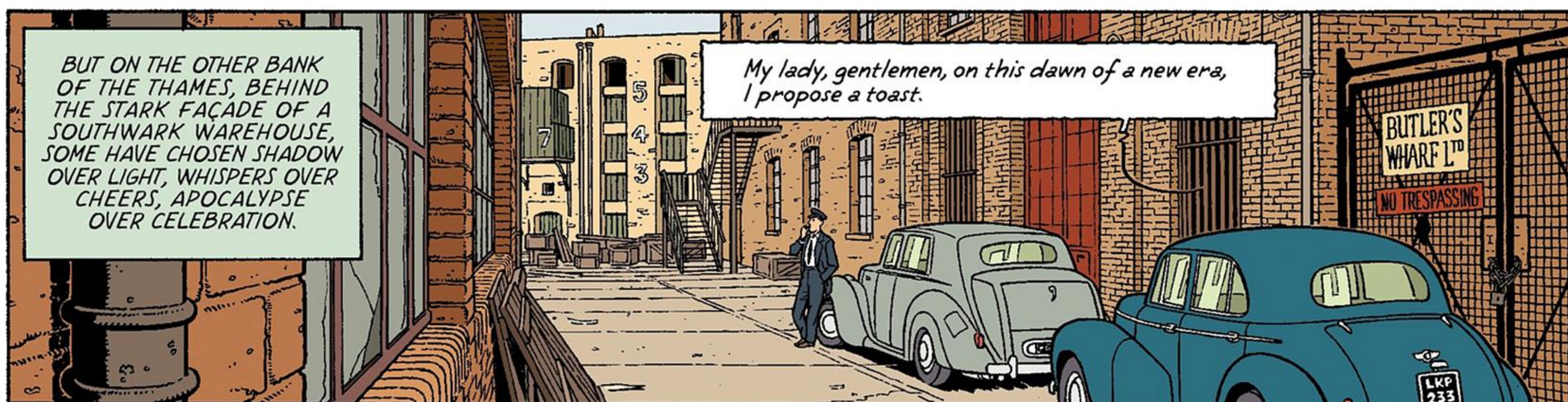
Colours: Laurence Croix

AS THE SLOW MARCH OF THE LIFE GUARDS RISES IN THE AIR OF A BEAUTIFUL, SUNNY DAY, THE PEOPLE OF LONDON HAVE GATHERED TO WATCH THE TROOPING THE COLOUR, THE YOUNG QUEEN'S OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY CEREMONY.

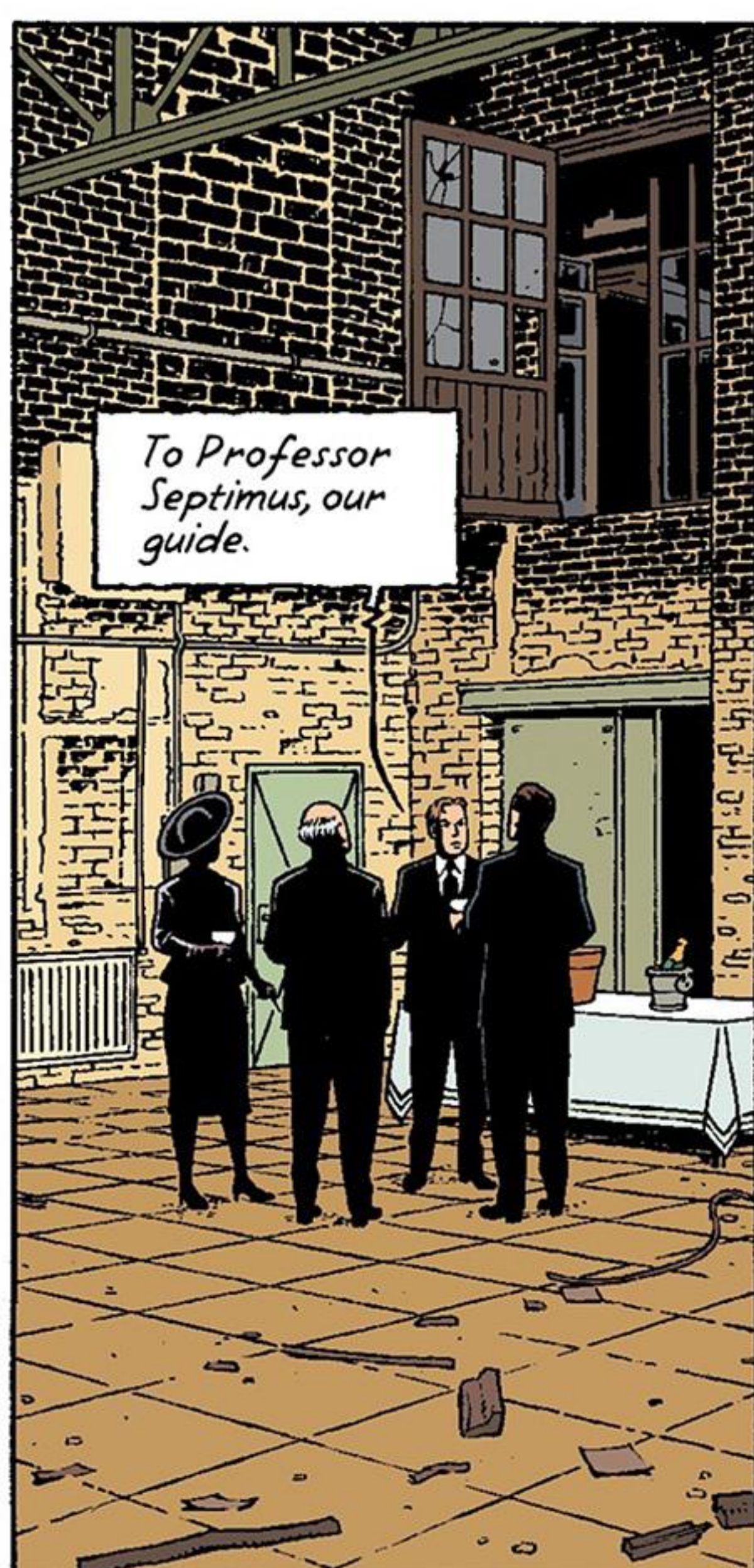


BUT ON THE OTHER BANK OF THE THAMES, BEHIND THE STARK FACADE OF A SOUTHWARK WAREHOUSE, SOME HAVE CHOSEN SHADOW OVER LIGHT, WHISPERS OVER CHEERS, APOCALYPSE OVER CELEBRATION.

My lady, gentlemen, on this dawn of a new era, I propose a toast.



To Professor Septimus, our guide.



PRESENT ARE LIEUTENANT MCFARLANE, FORMER OFFICER ATTACHED TO THE OFFICE OF CHARLES GARRISON, COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AND HEAD OF SCOTLAND YARD.

To Septimus!



LADY ROWENA, INCONSOLABLE YOUNG WIDOW, WHOSE SKILL LIES IN SELECTING HEALTHY FORTUNES IN AILING HUSBANDS...

To Septimus!



BANKER OSCAR BAILEY, WHO RAISED HIS FORTUNE OVER THE EXPLOITATION OF THE MASSES - AS WELL AS THE TILMANSTONE COAL MINES IN KENT.

To Septimus!



AND PROFESSOR EVANGELY, FIRED FROM THE PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE FOR ENGAGING IN QUESTIONABLE PRACTICES ON CERTAIN PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM MENTAL DISORDERS.

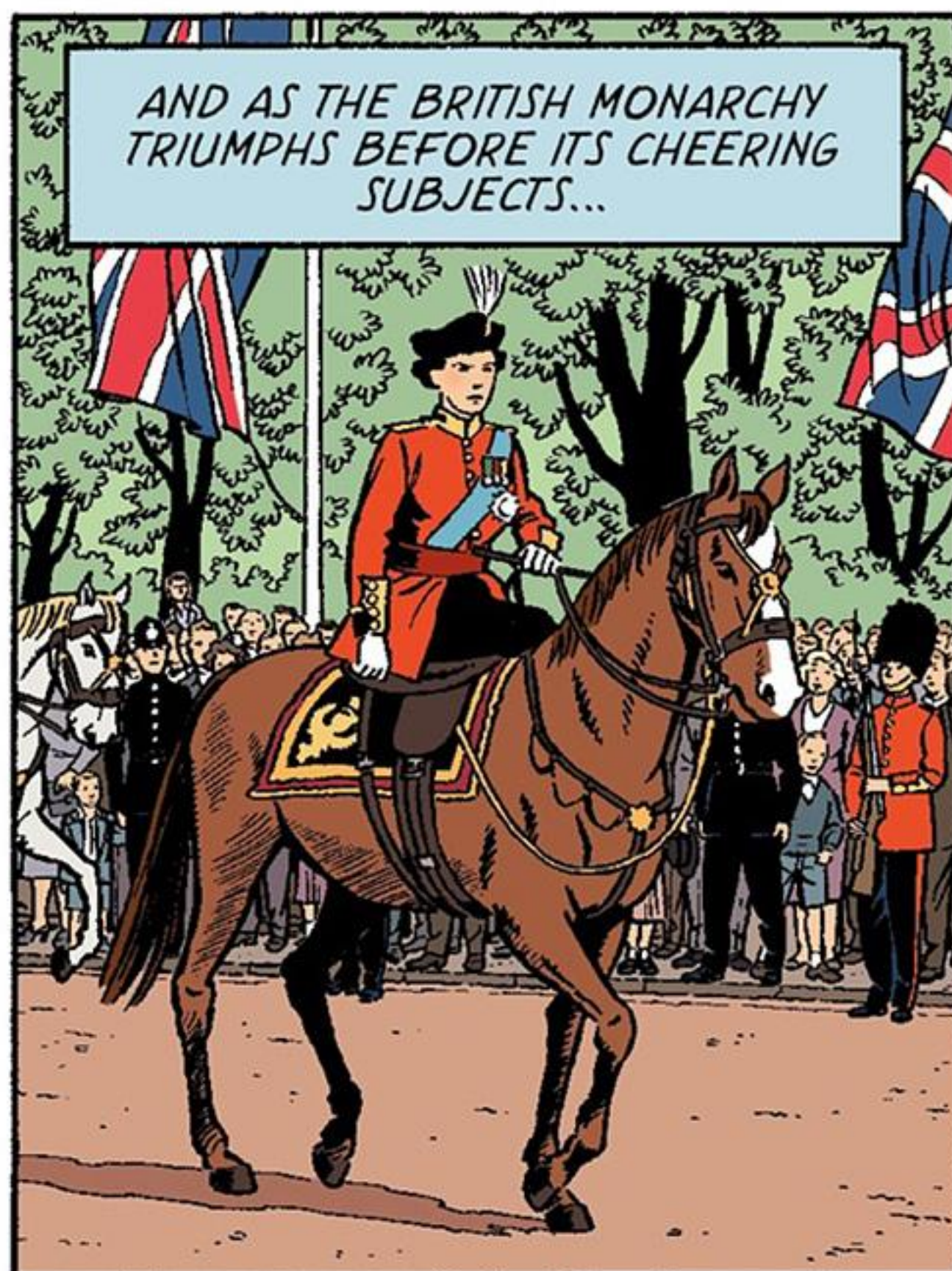
To Jonathan Septimus!



ALL APPEAR UNITED AROUND A SINGLE OBSESSION, AN IDEA ROOTED IN THE MISTAKES OF THE PAST. FOR THE PAST IS MORE TO THEIR TASTE THAN A PRESENT THEY CONSIDER TOO PUSILLANIMOUS FOR CONCEITED MINDS SUCH AS THEIRS...

And to our Great Work.

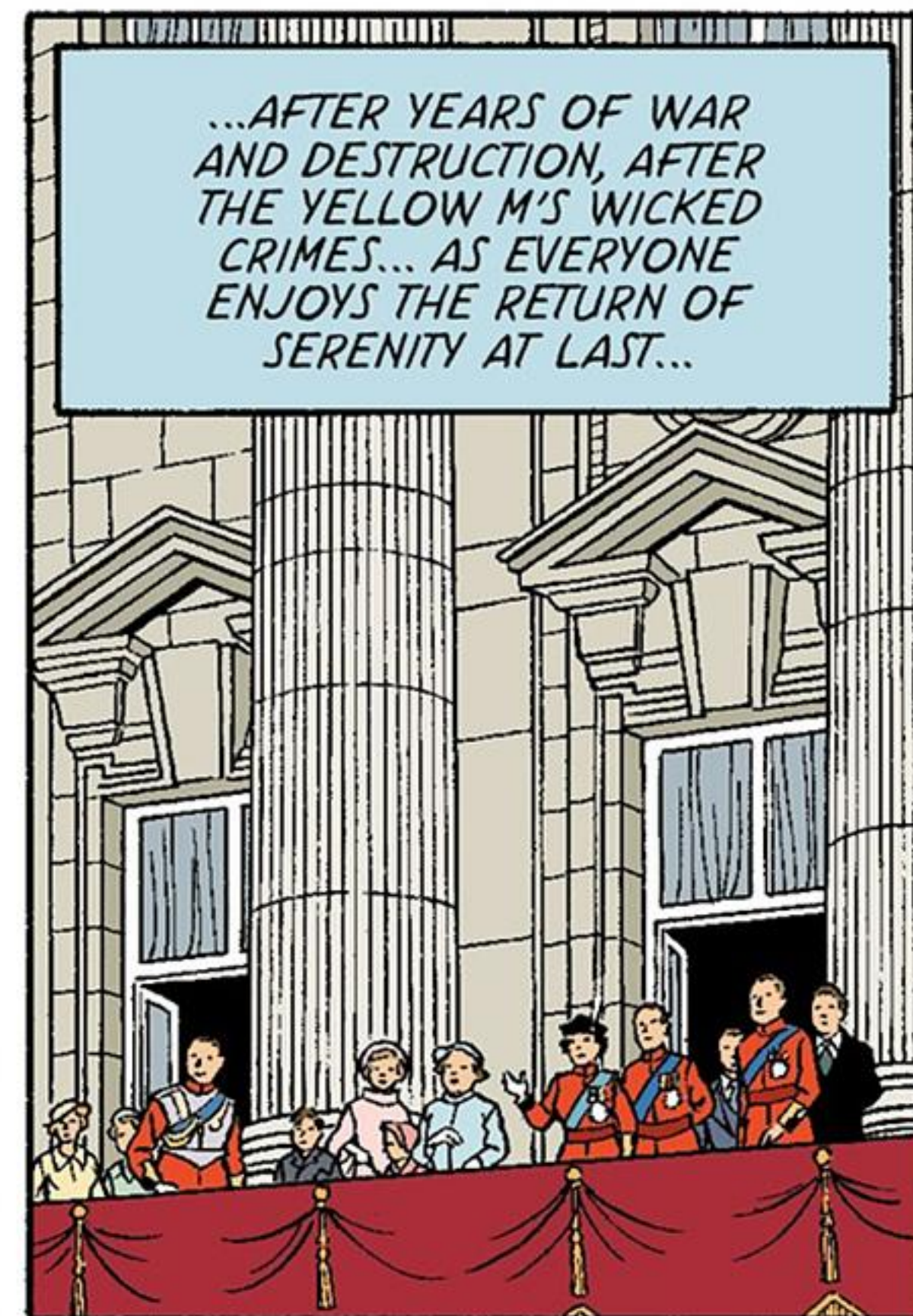




AND AS THE BRITISH MONARCHY TRIUMPHS BEFORE ITS CHEERING SUBJECTS...



...AS THE MARCHING HORSES AND THE BEATING DRUMS SET THE PACE OF THE PARADE FOR A POWERFUL NATION CONFIDENT IN ITSELF AND ITS FUTURE...

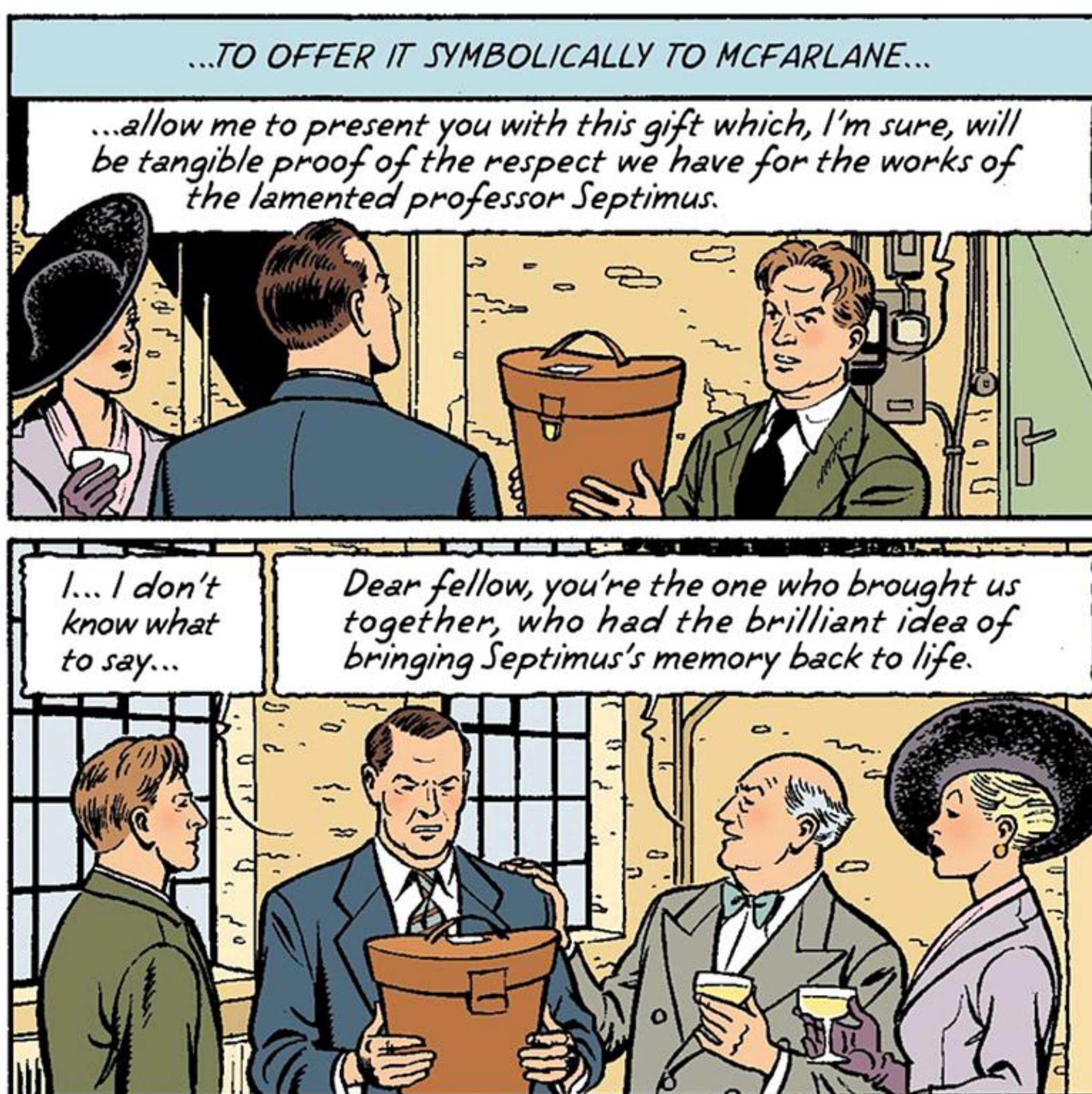


...AFTER YEARS OF WAR AND DESTRUCTION, AFTER THE YELLOW M'S WICKED CRIMES... AS EVERYONE ENJOYS THE RETURN OF SERENITY AT LAST...



...PROFESSOR EVANGELY PICKS UP THE HATBOX HE'S BROUGHT WITH HIM...

My dear Lieutenant...



...TO OFFER IT SYMBOLICALLY TO MCFARLANE...

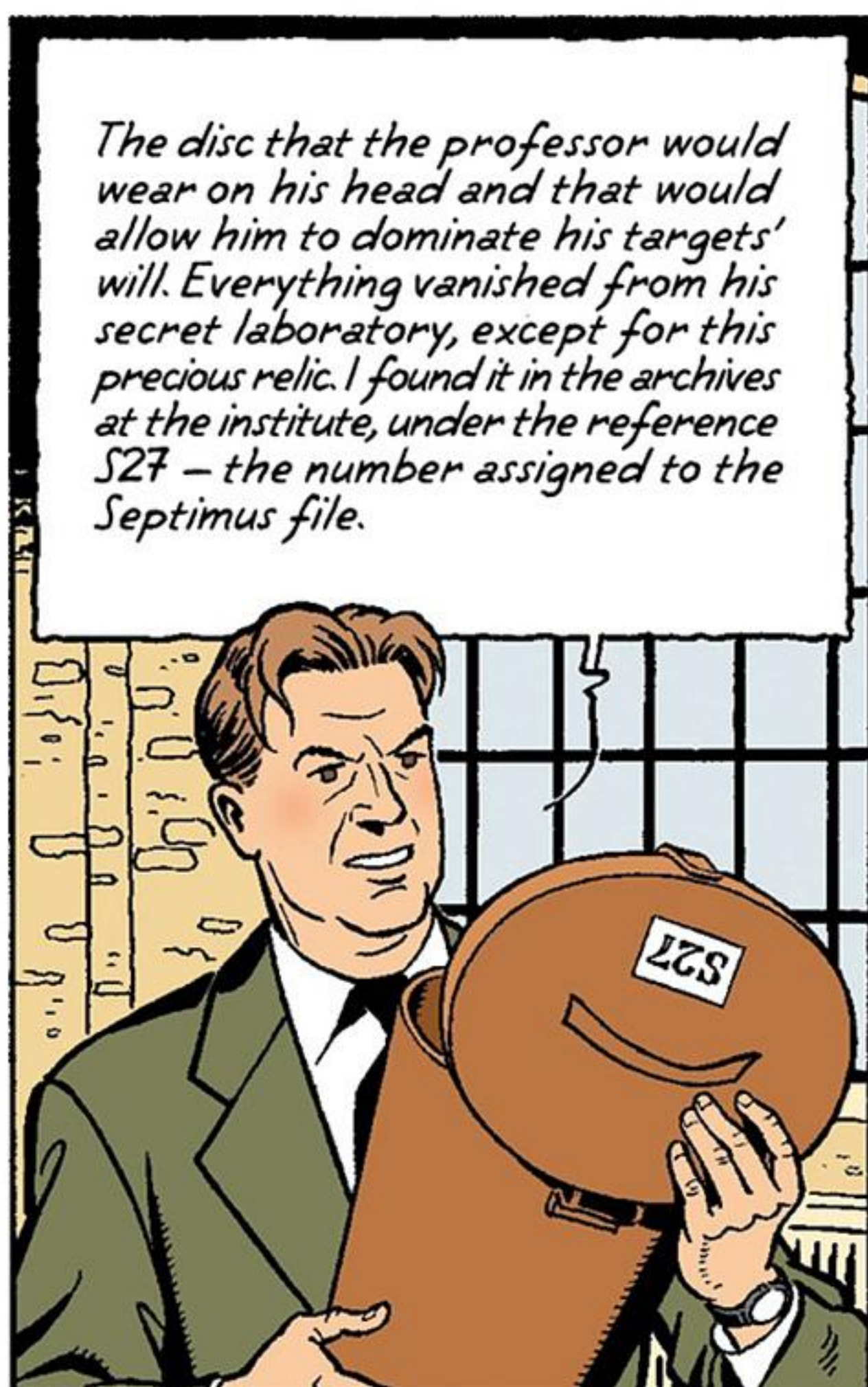
...allow me to present you with this gift which, I'm sure, will be tangible proof of the respect we have for the works of the lamented professor Septimus.

I... I don't know what to say...

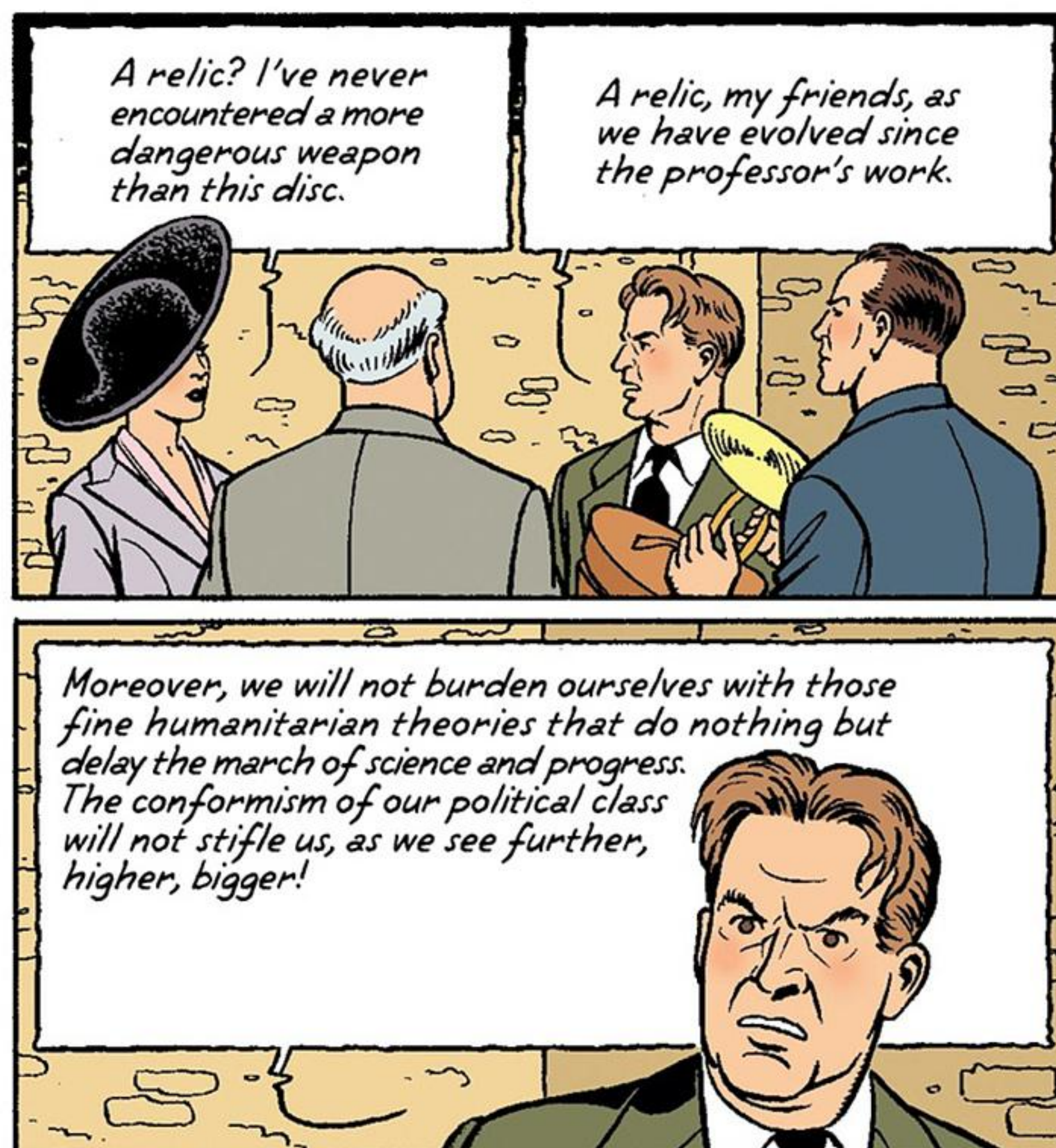
Dear fellow, you're the one who brought us together, who had the brilliant idea of bringing Septimus's memory back to life.



Good heavens! But that's...!!?



The disc that the professor would wear on his head and that would allow him to dominate his targets' will. Everything vanished from his secret laboratory, except for this precious relic. I found it in the archives at the institute, under the reference S27 - the number assigned to the Septimus file.



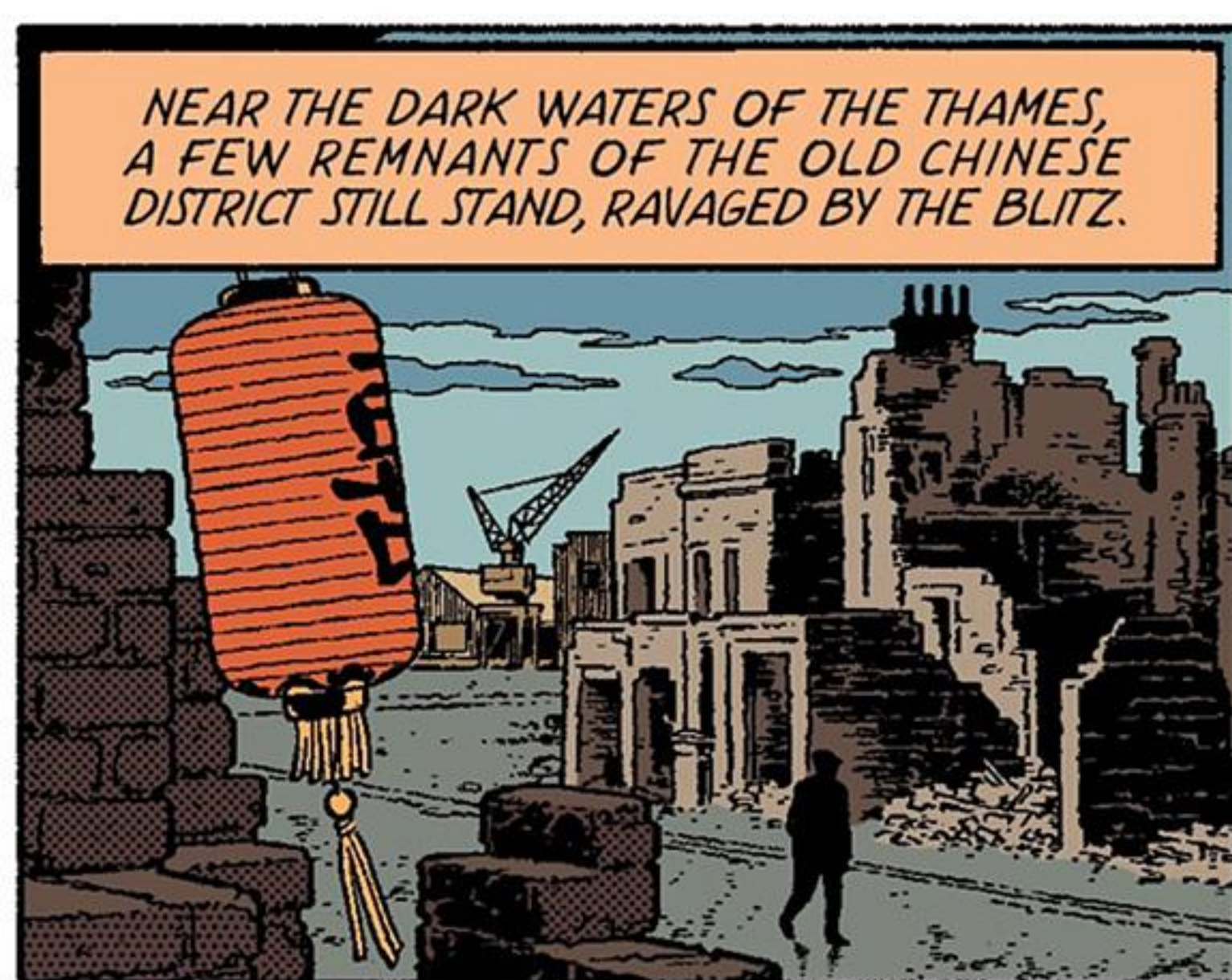
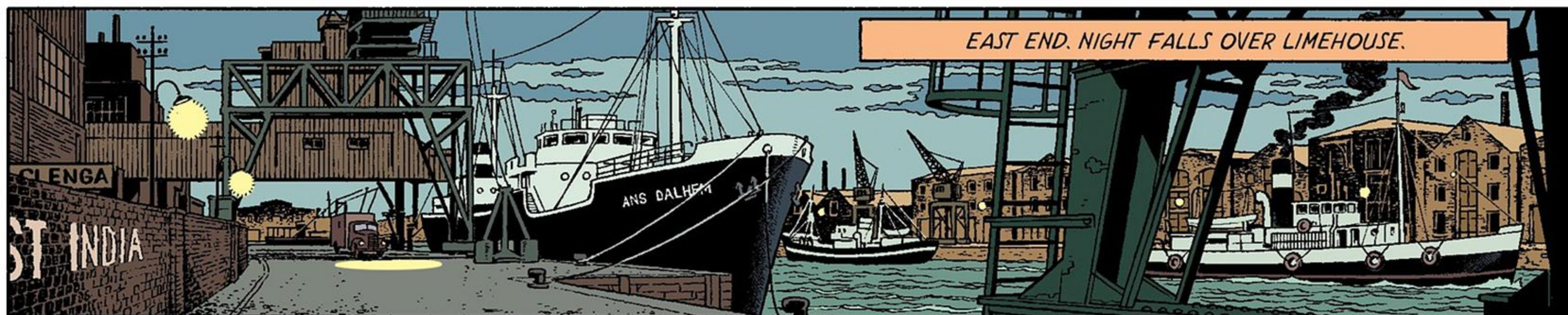
A relic? I've never encountered a more dangerous weapon than this disc.

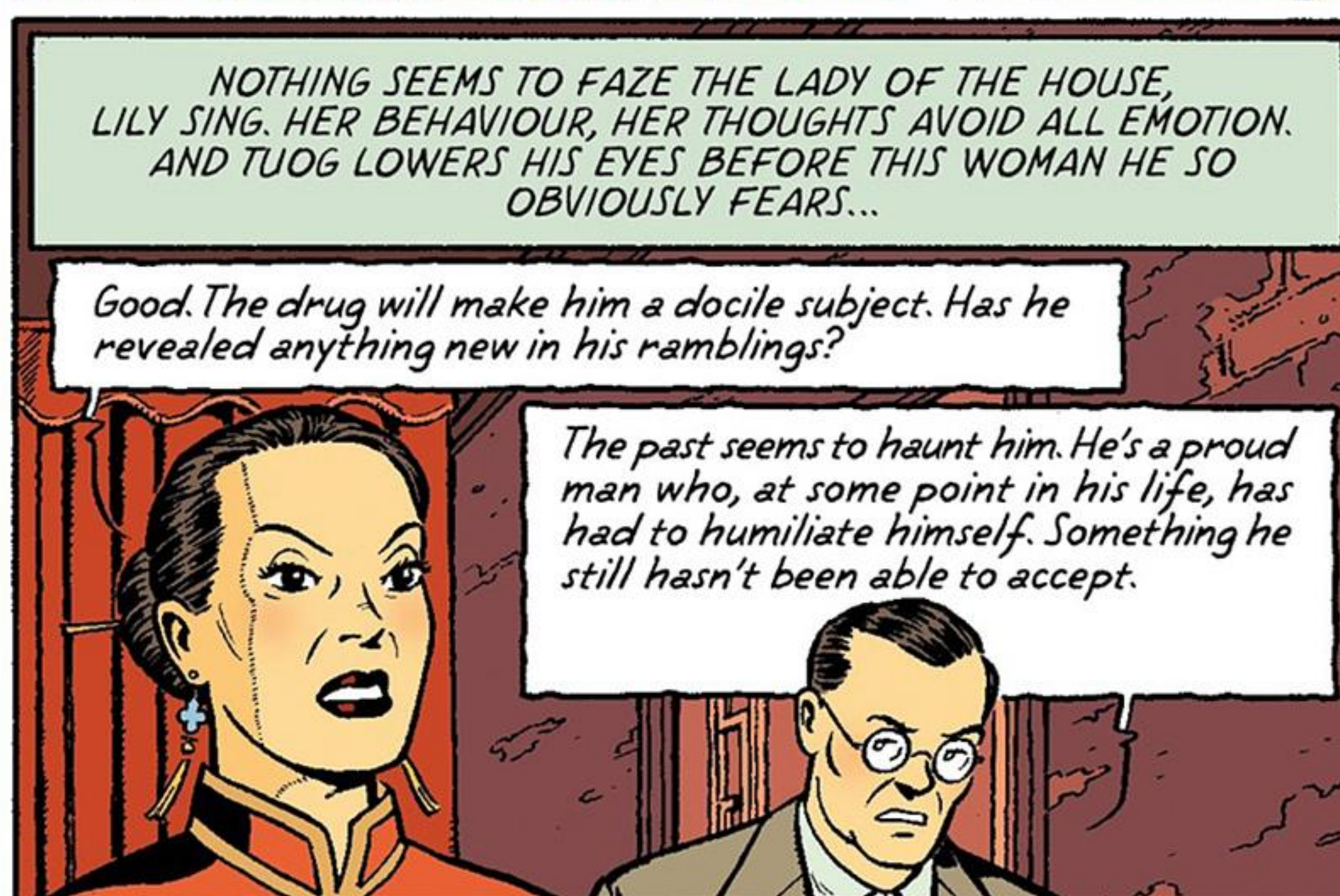
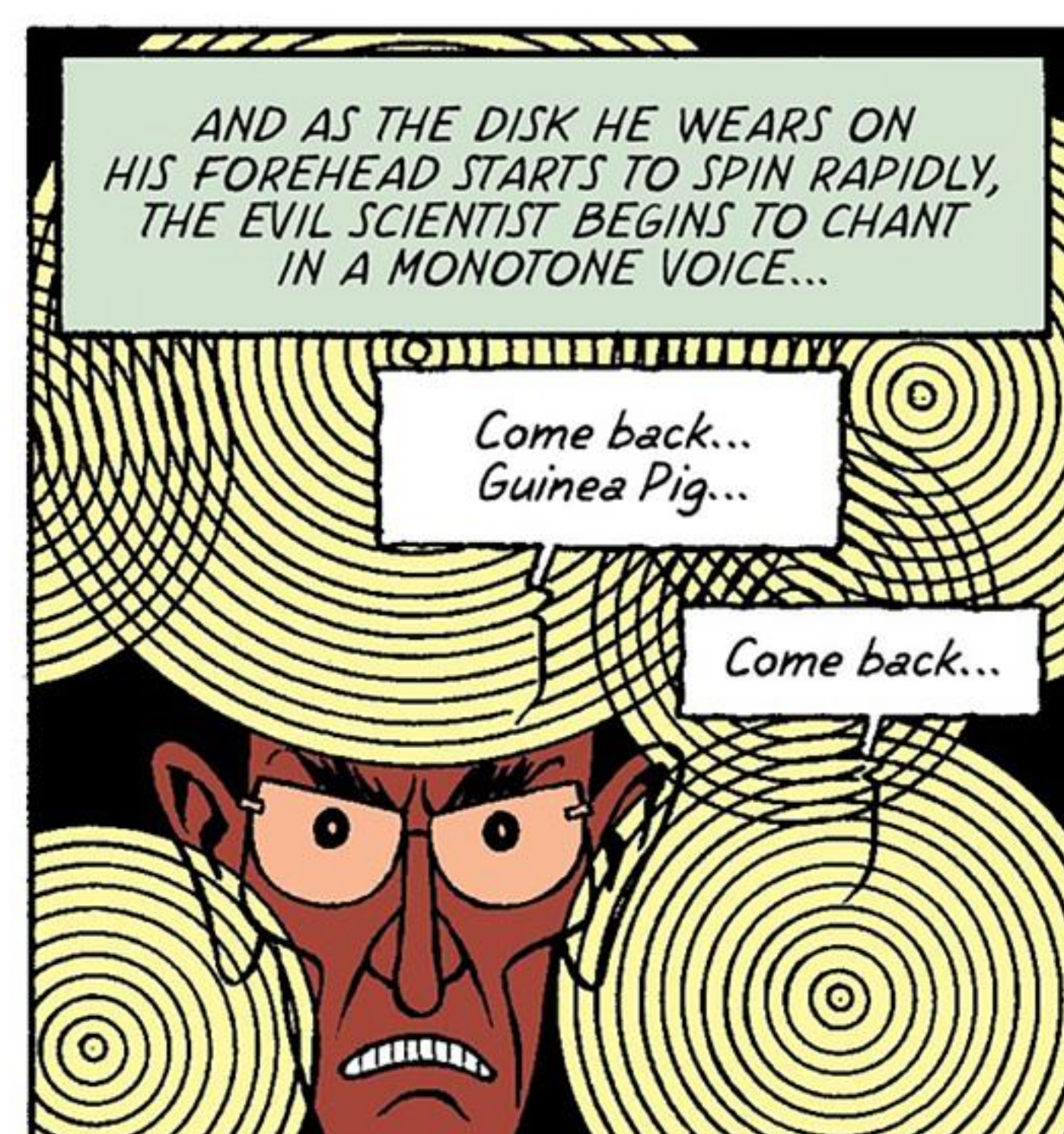
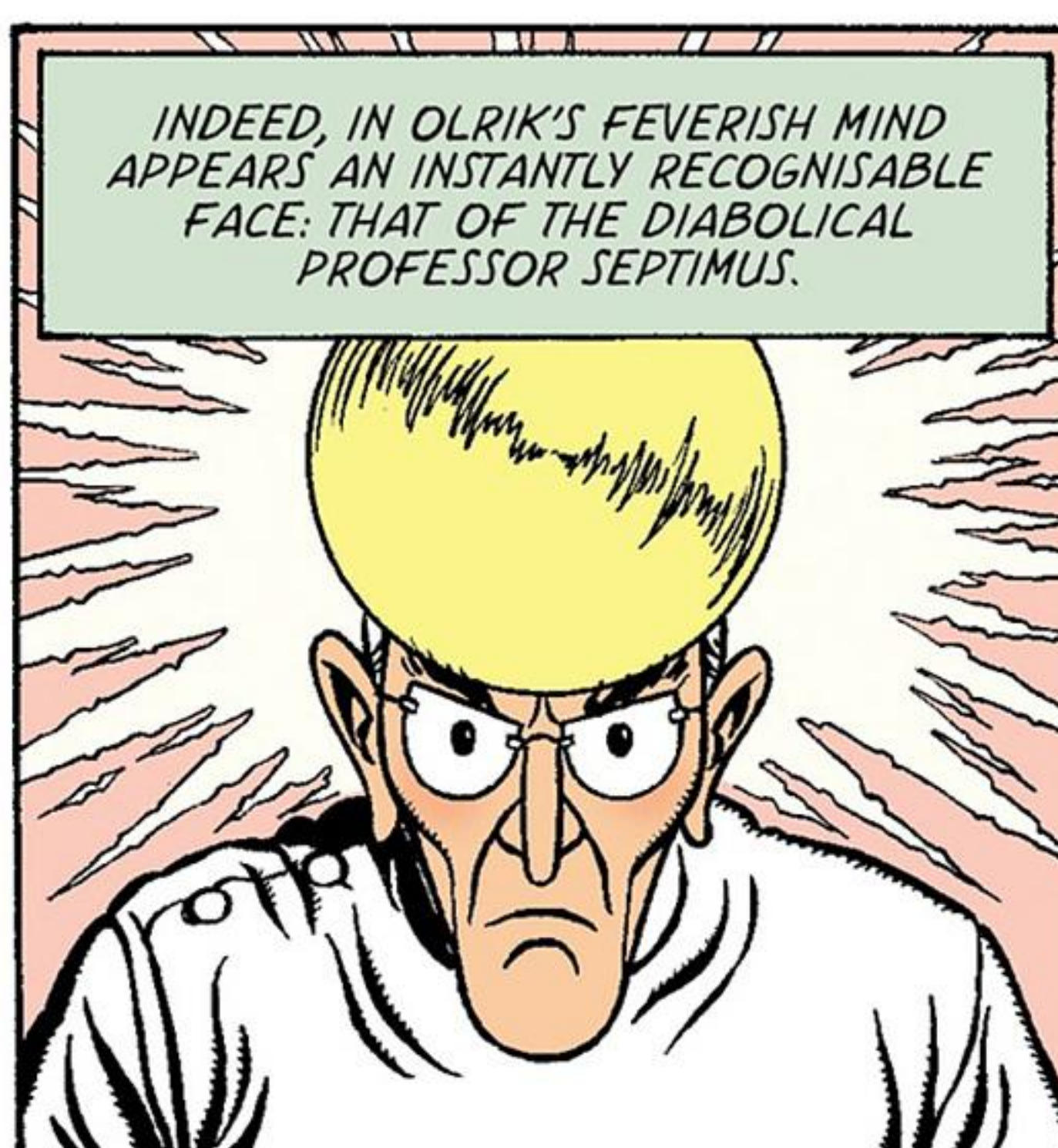
A relic, my friends, as we have evolved since the professor's work.

Moreover, we will not burden ourselves with those fine humanitarian theories that do nothing but delay the march of science and progress. The conformism of our political class will not stifle us, as we see further, higher, bigger!



We still need to find a new guinea pig for that, my dear Evangely. Someone on whom you can test your research...

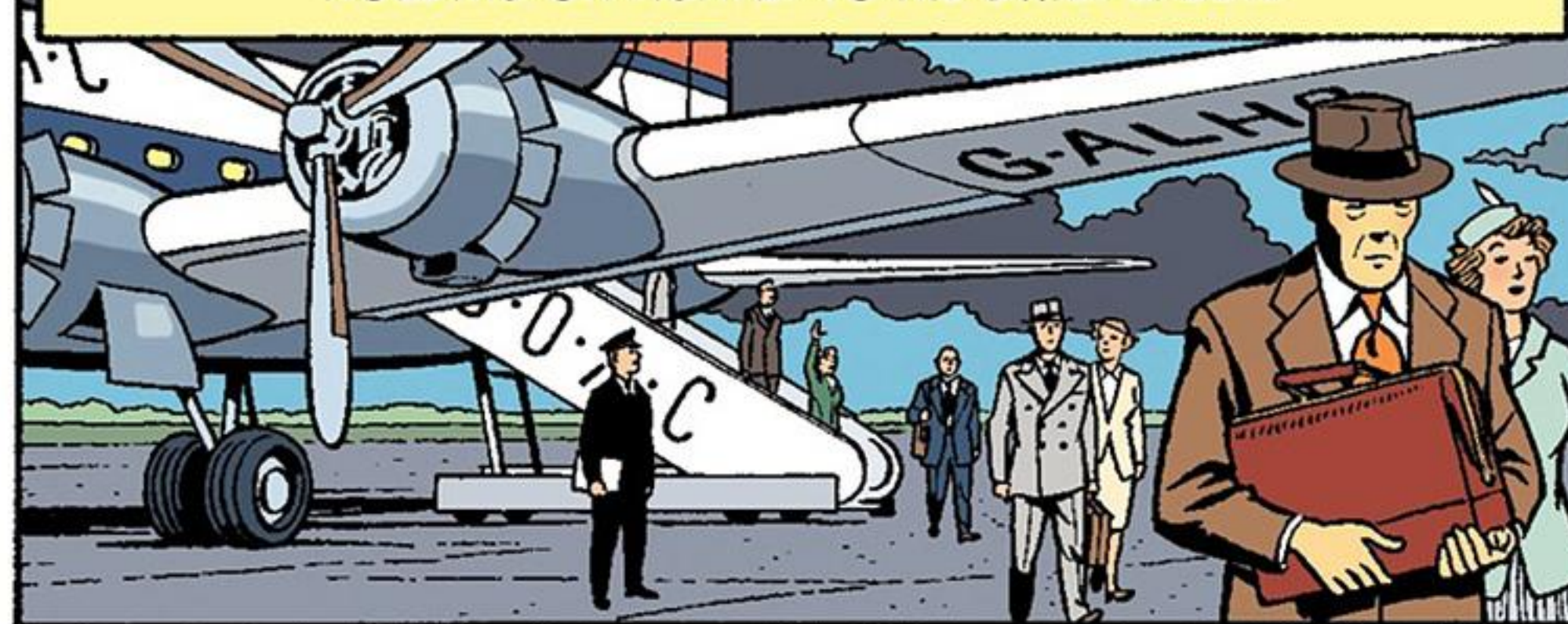




But I will soon know more. I'm expecting someone who will be able to help us pull the colonel out of that addiction before it leads him to his grave!



THE NEXT EVENING, A RATHER STRANGE CHARACTER LANDS IN LONDON. DURING THE WHOLE FLIGHT, HE HAS SPOKEN TO NO ONE, REFUSING ALL FOOD OR DRINK AND SIMPLY HOLDING ON TIGHTLY TO HIS BRIEFCASE...



I hope I didn't keep you waiting too long. The plane was late.

Don't worry. I've never forgotten that patience is a virtue...



The path of virtues is long and narrow.

Fortunately, we shall take a different one. Where I live, vices have the place of honour...



I like monsters. They amuse me, as they are the best way to fight boredom. One of them, however, is causing me serious trouble. I'm losing him...



Such is the essence of monsters. They defy all rules, all expectations...

My expectations concerning Colonel Olrik are great. But in his current state of prostration, he's rather useless to me...



And you think I could be of some assistance...

You worked for the despot Basam Damdu. Under the colonel's command. Which let you share some of his secrets...



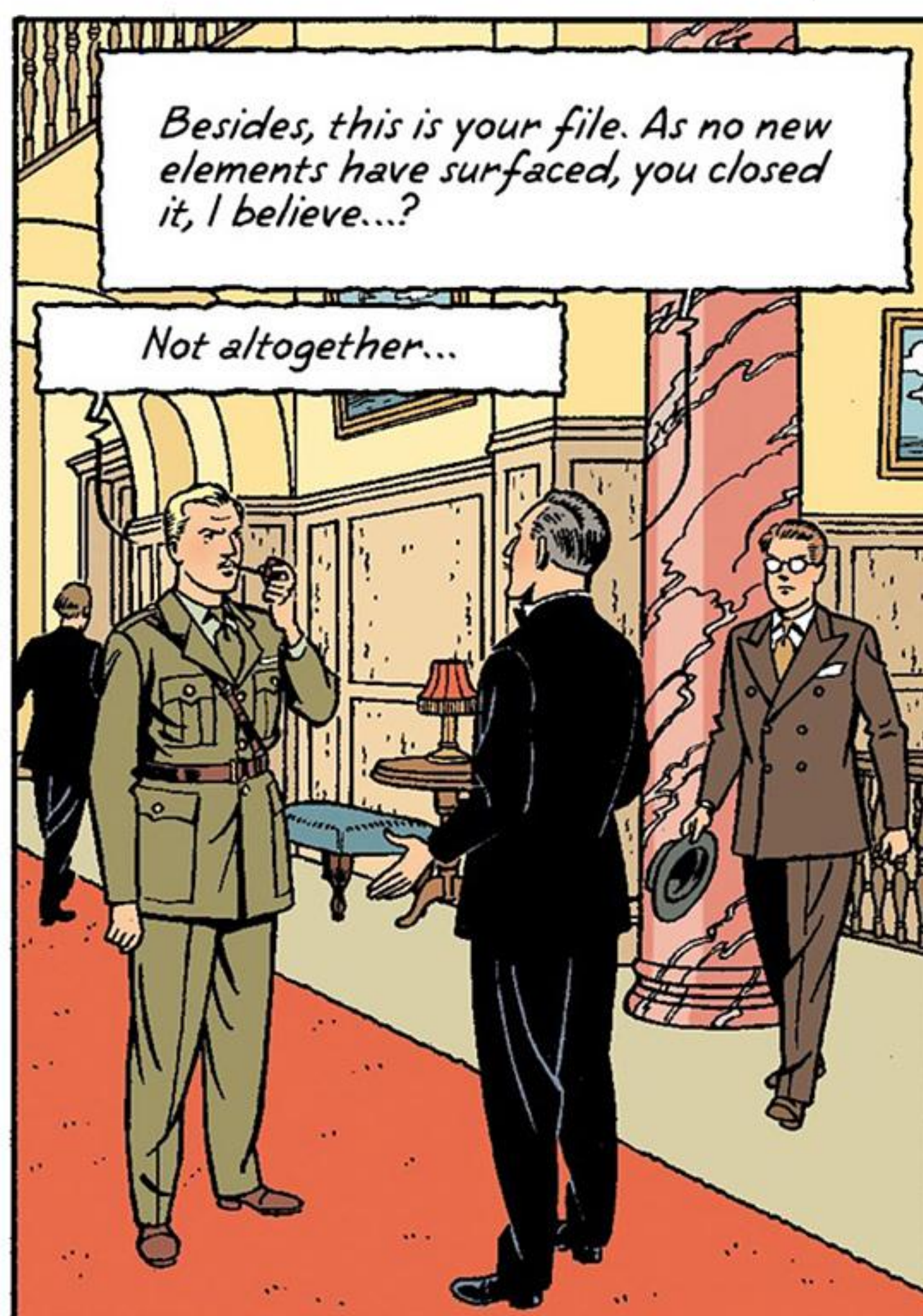
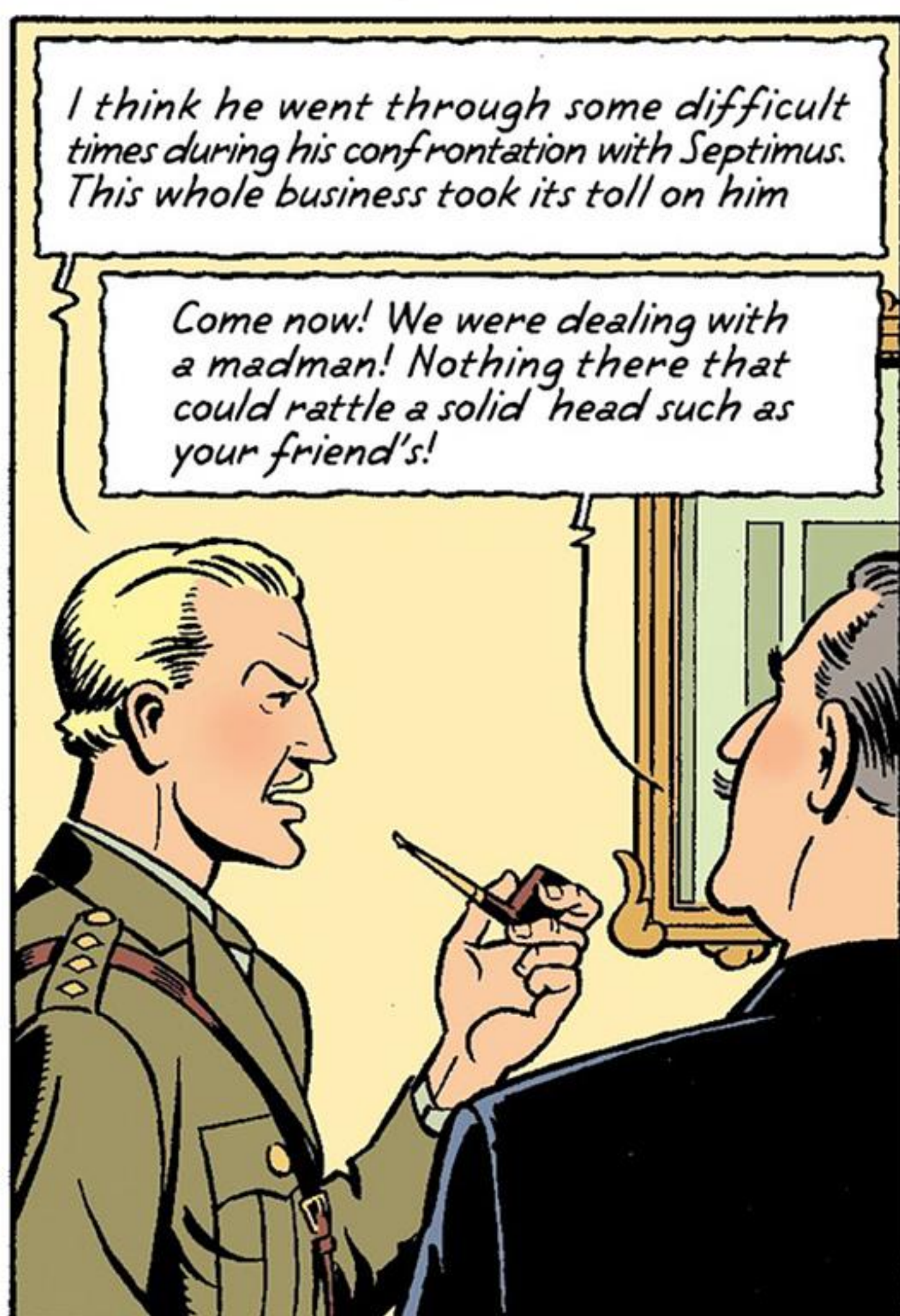
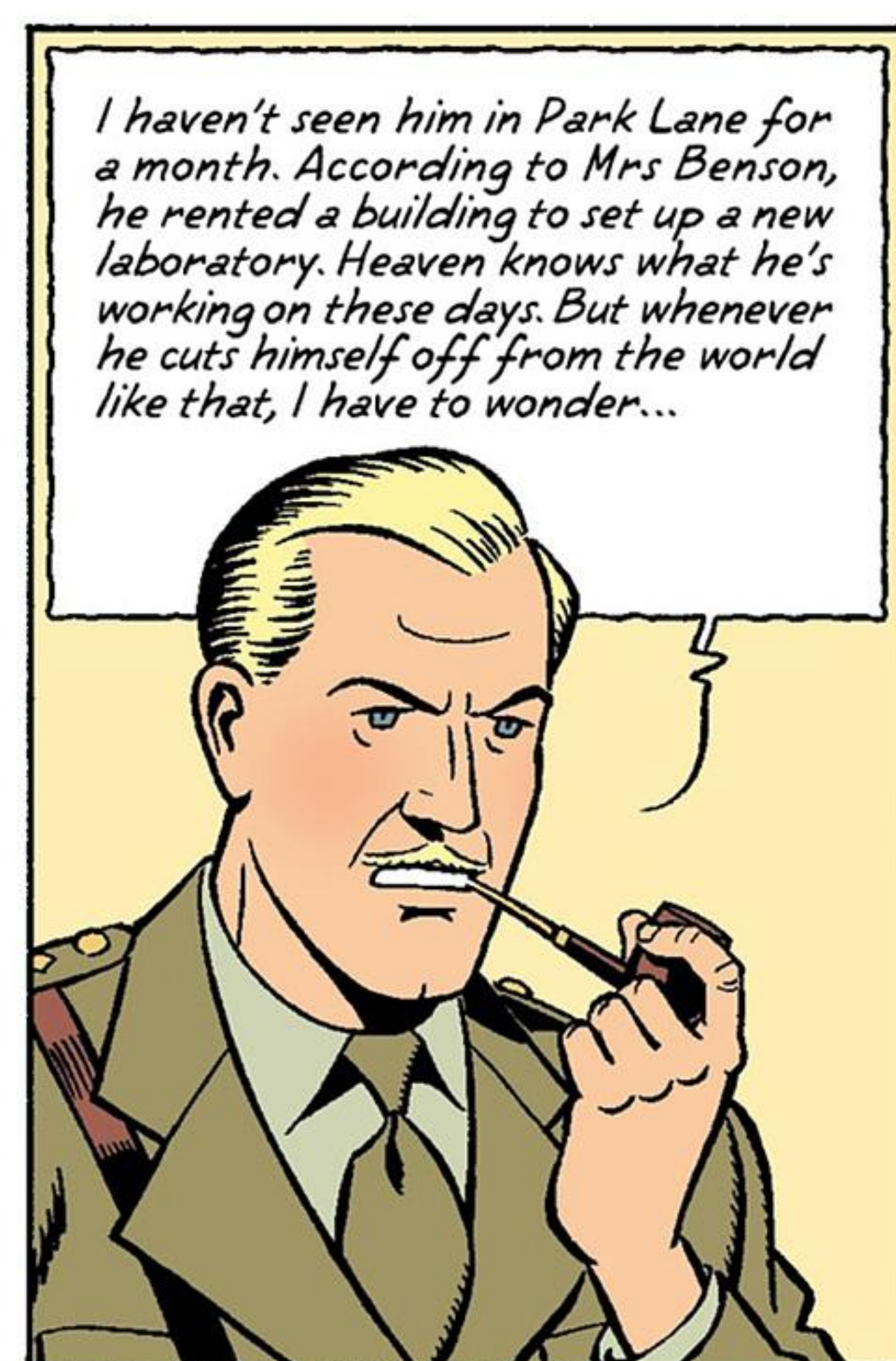
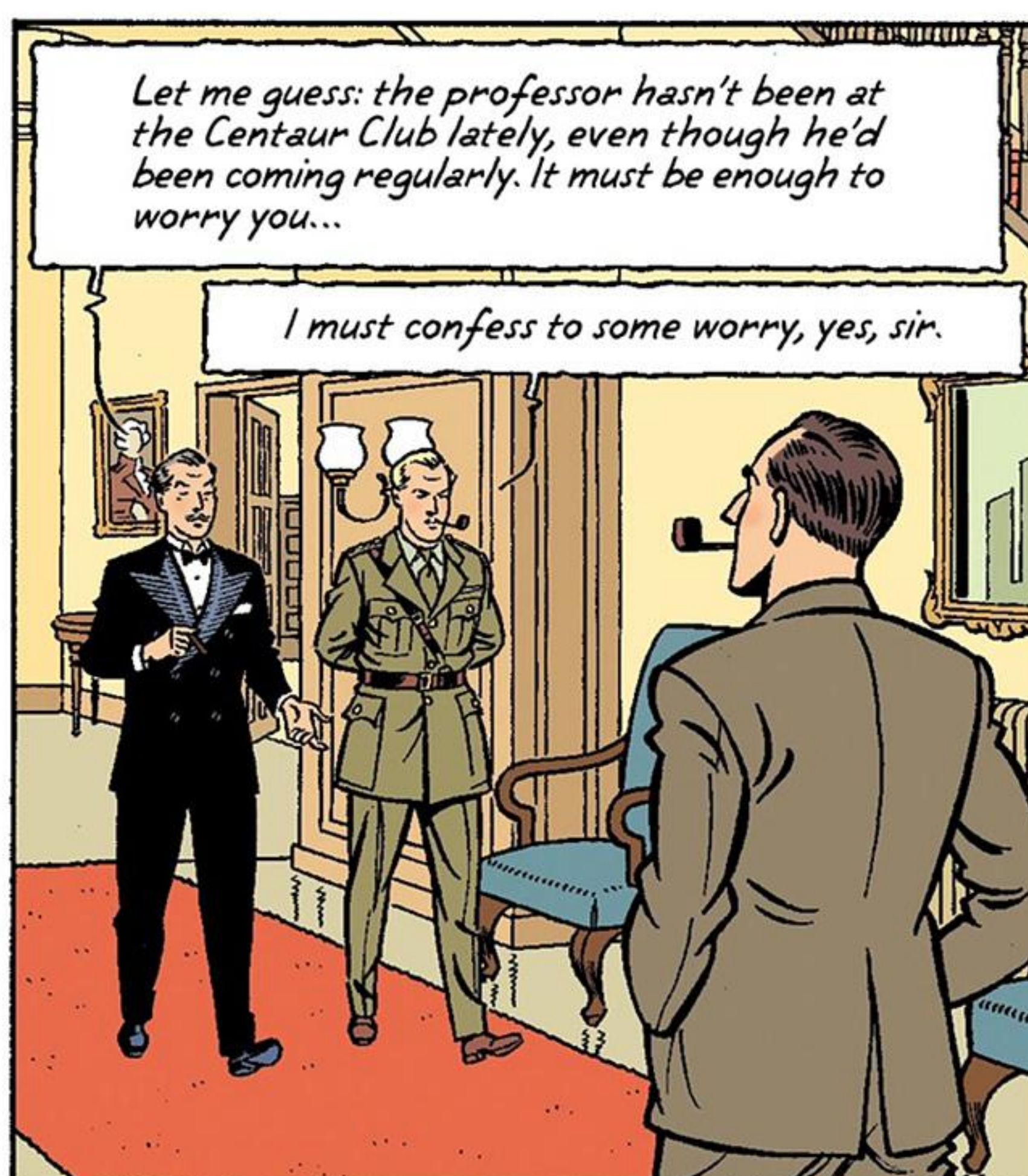
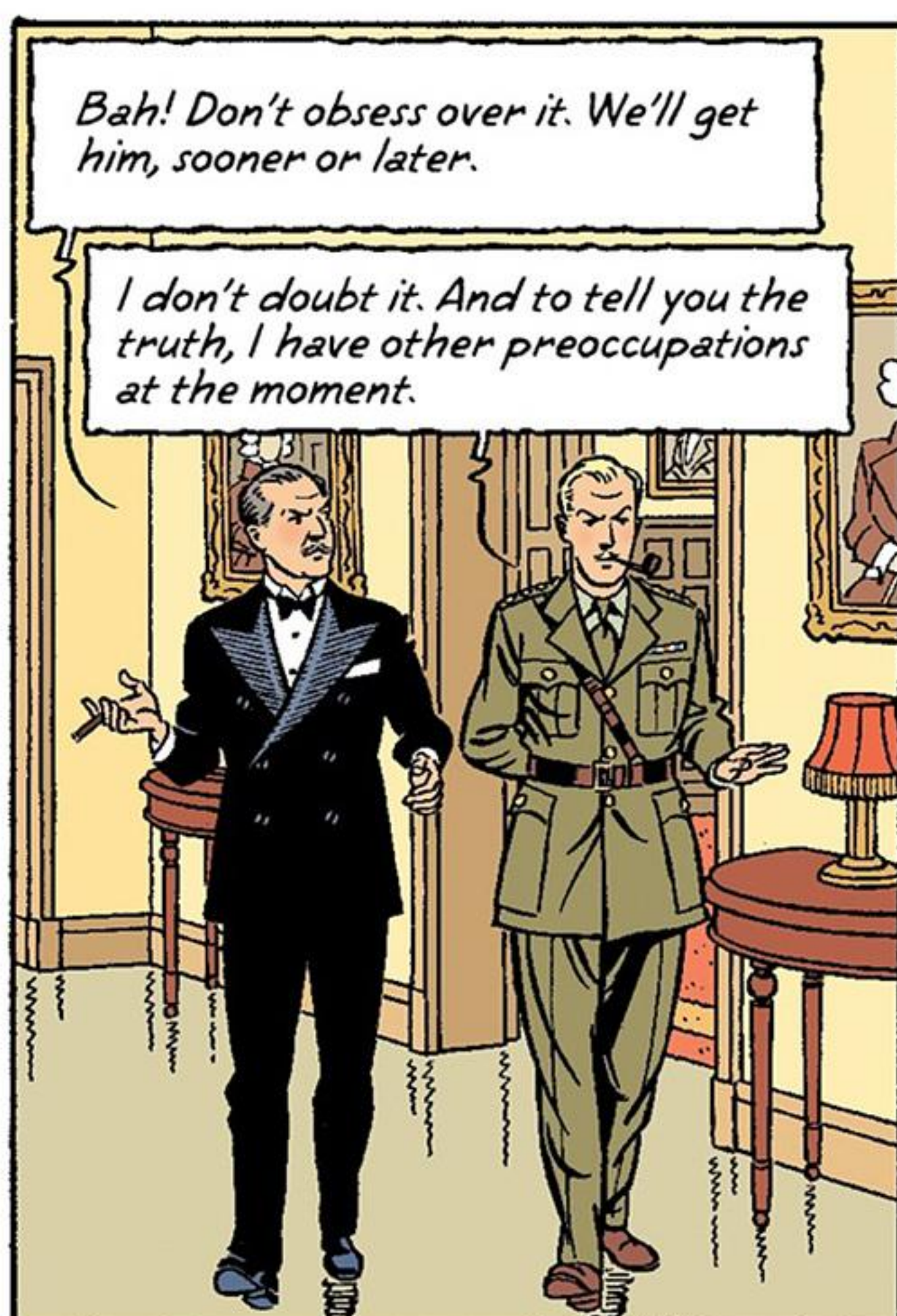
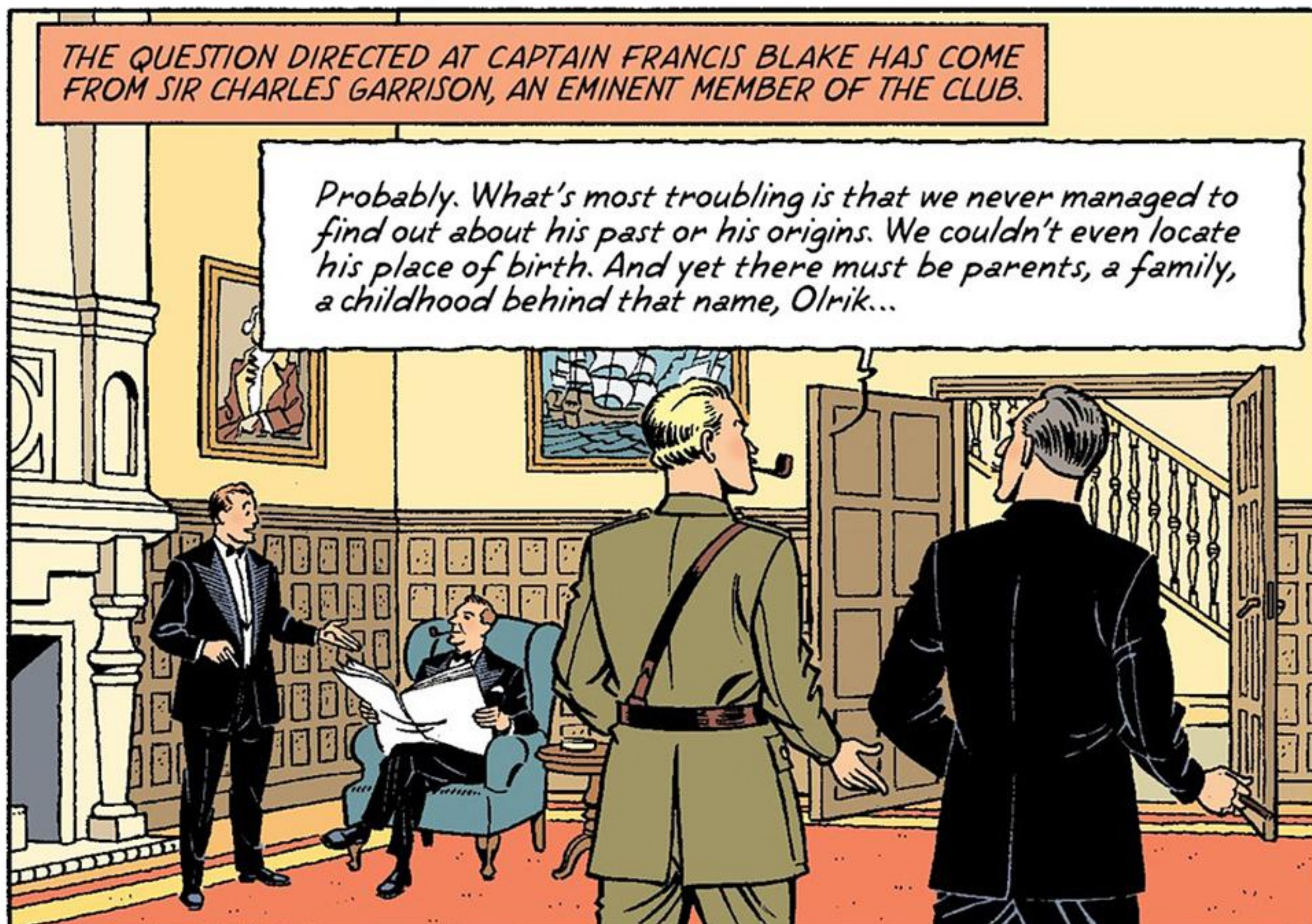
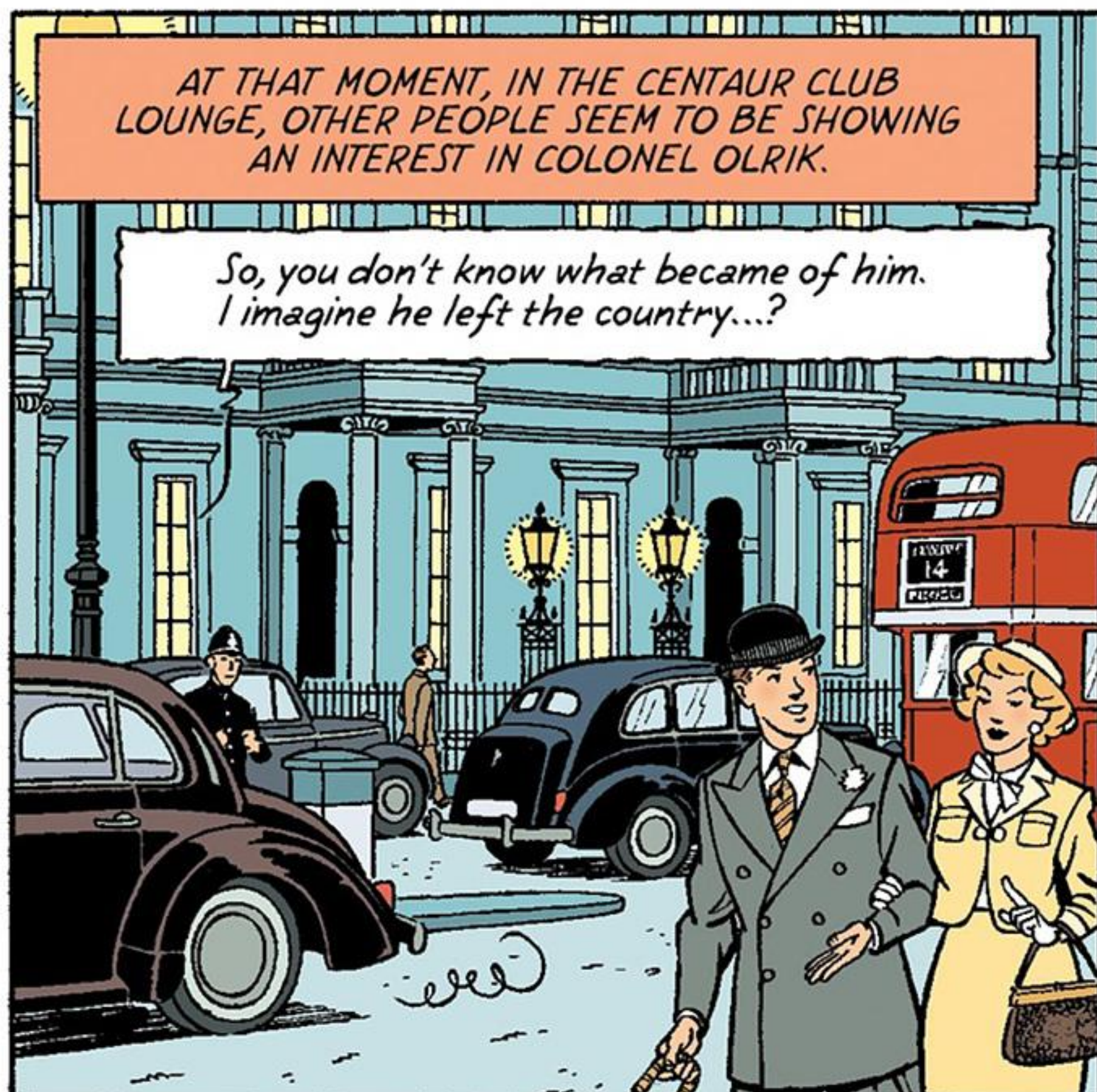
I'd like to know some of them.

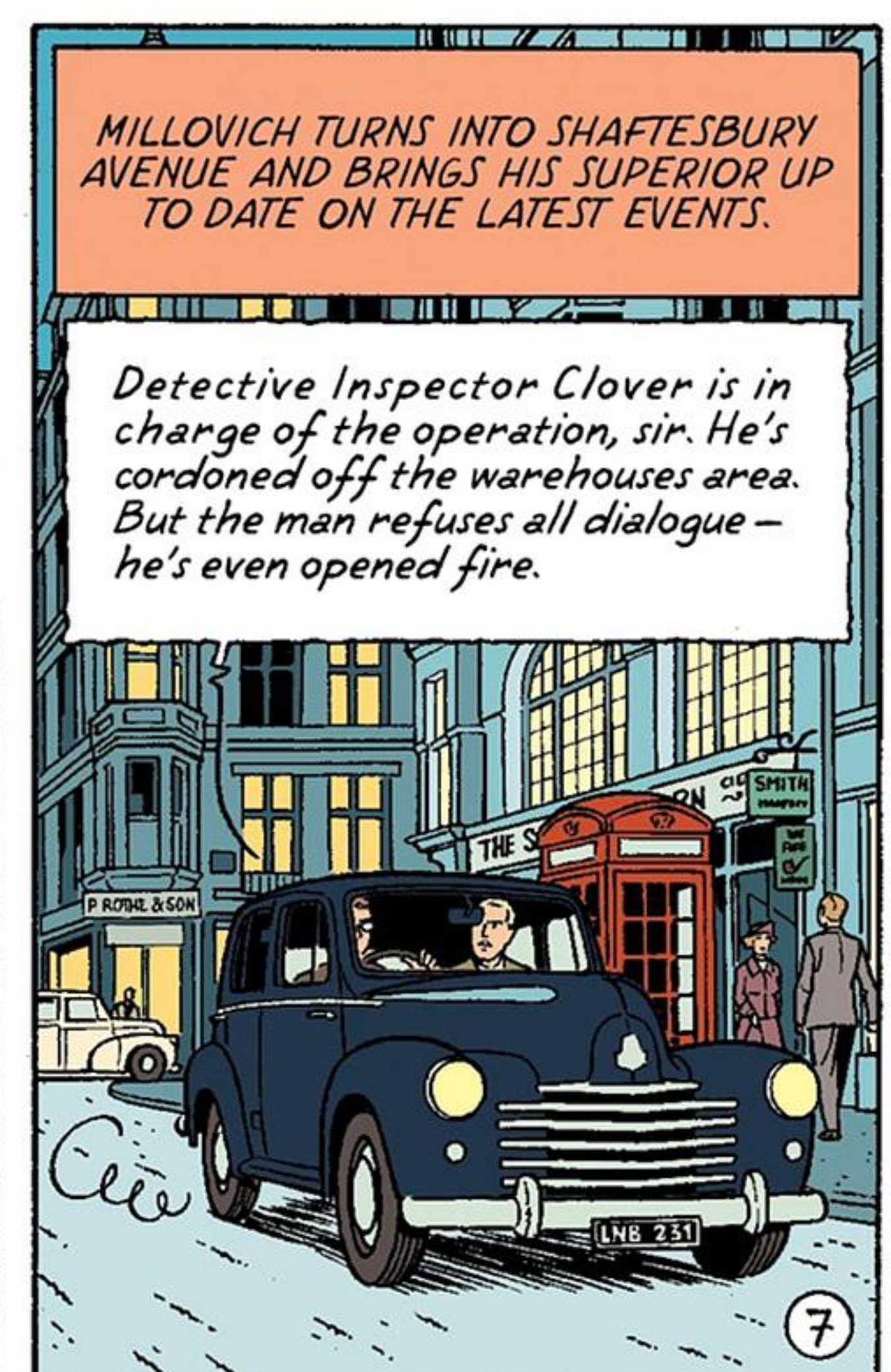
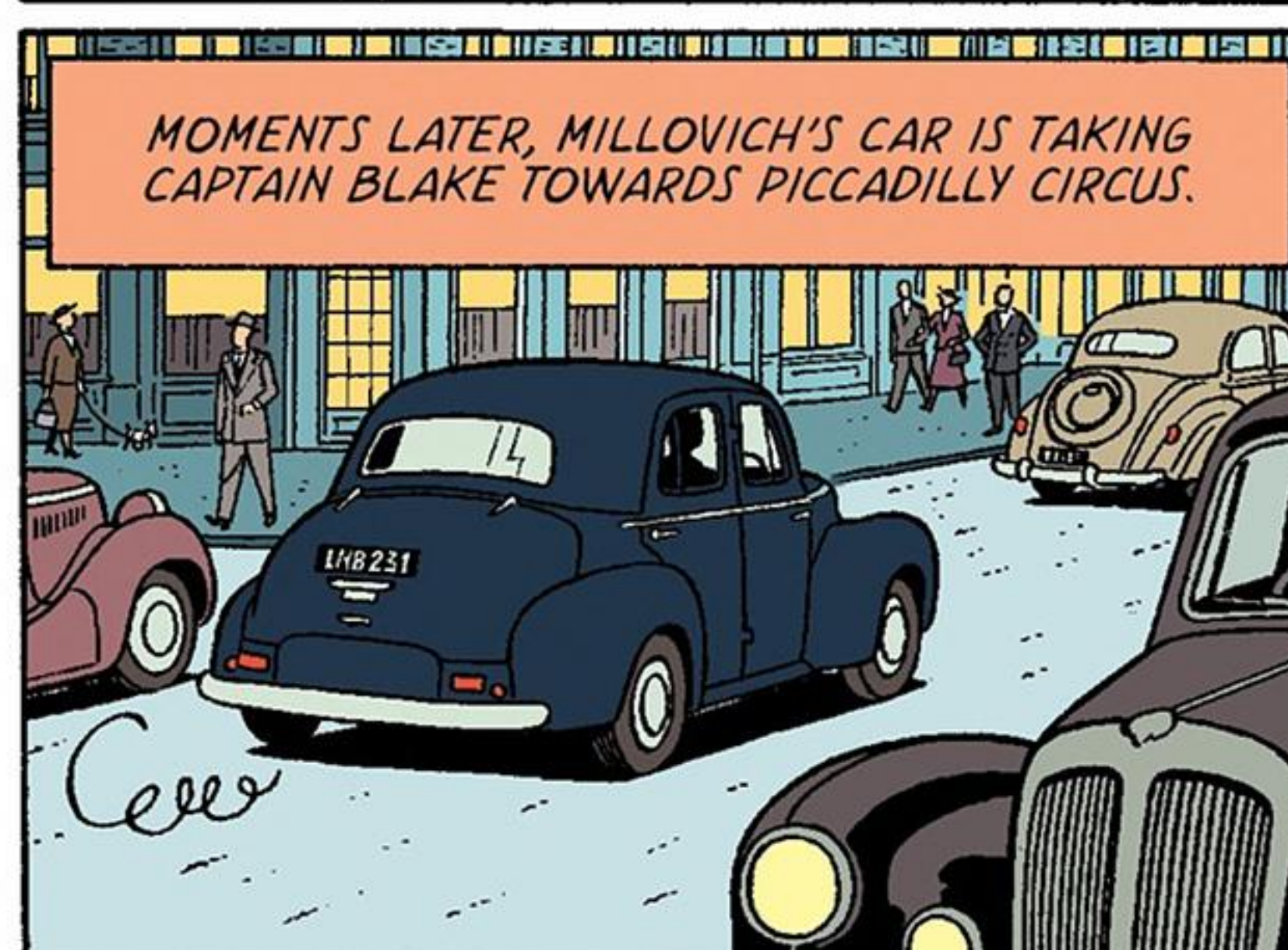
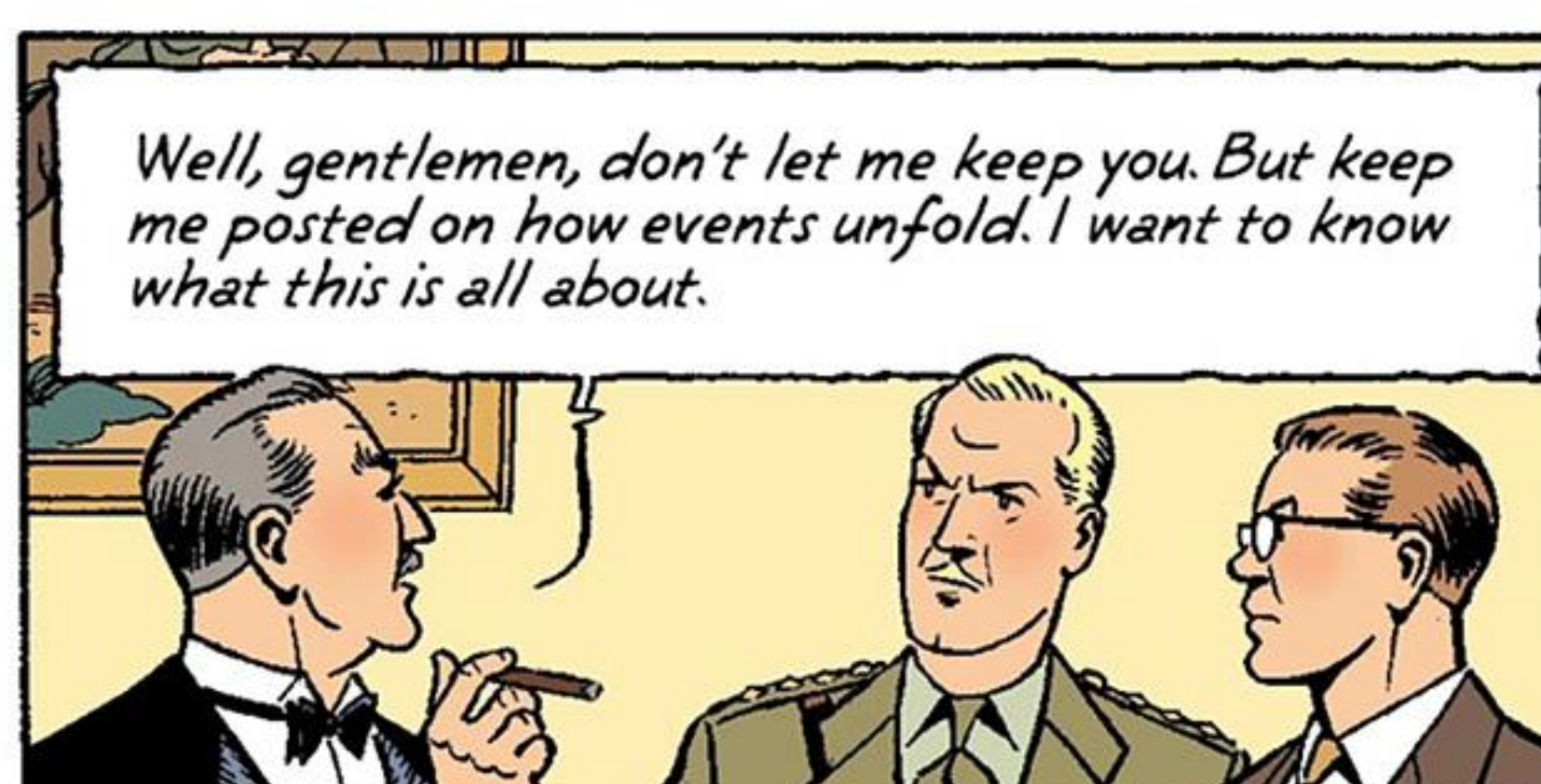
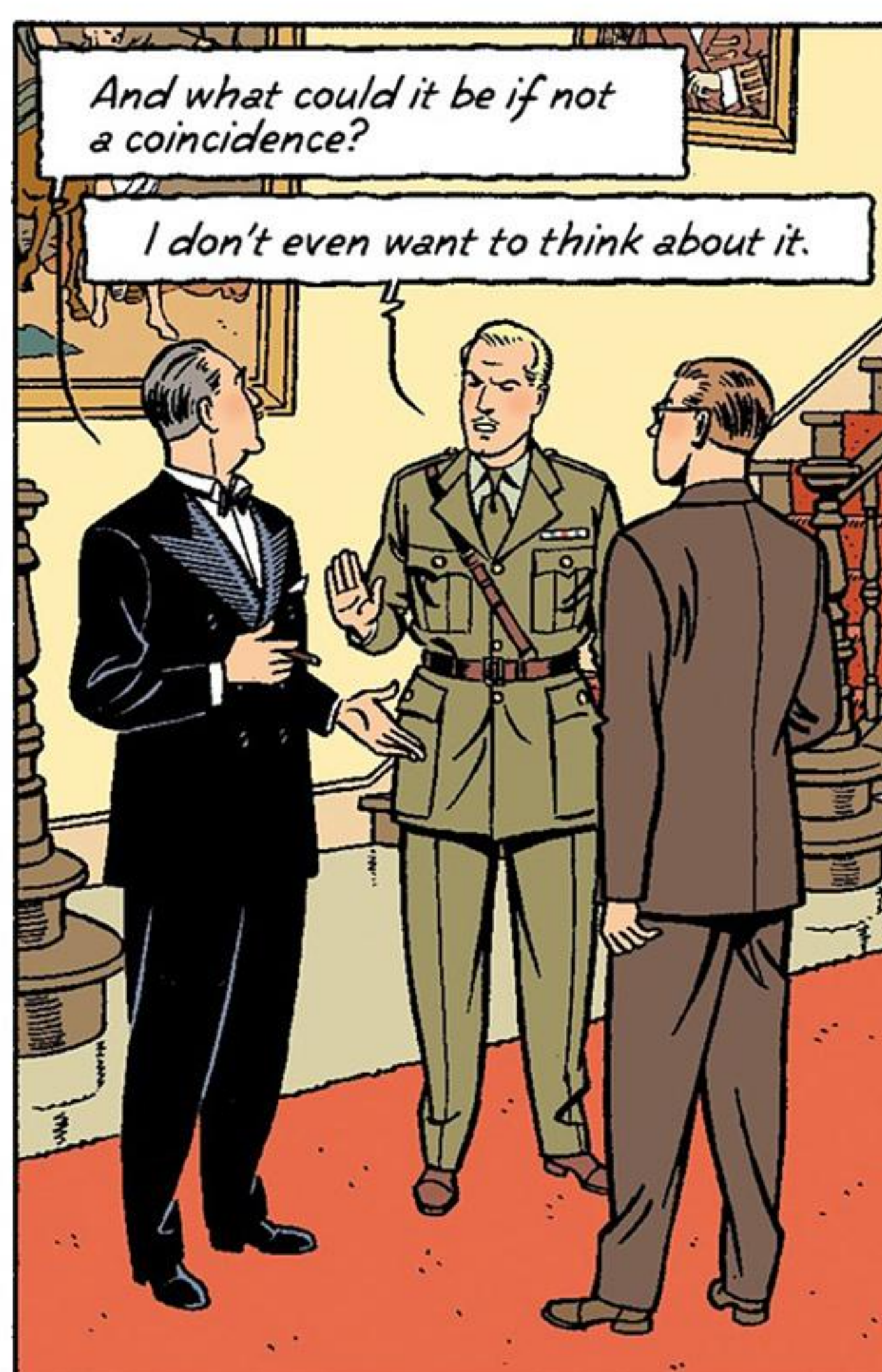
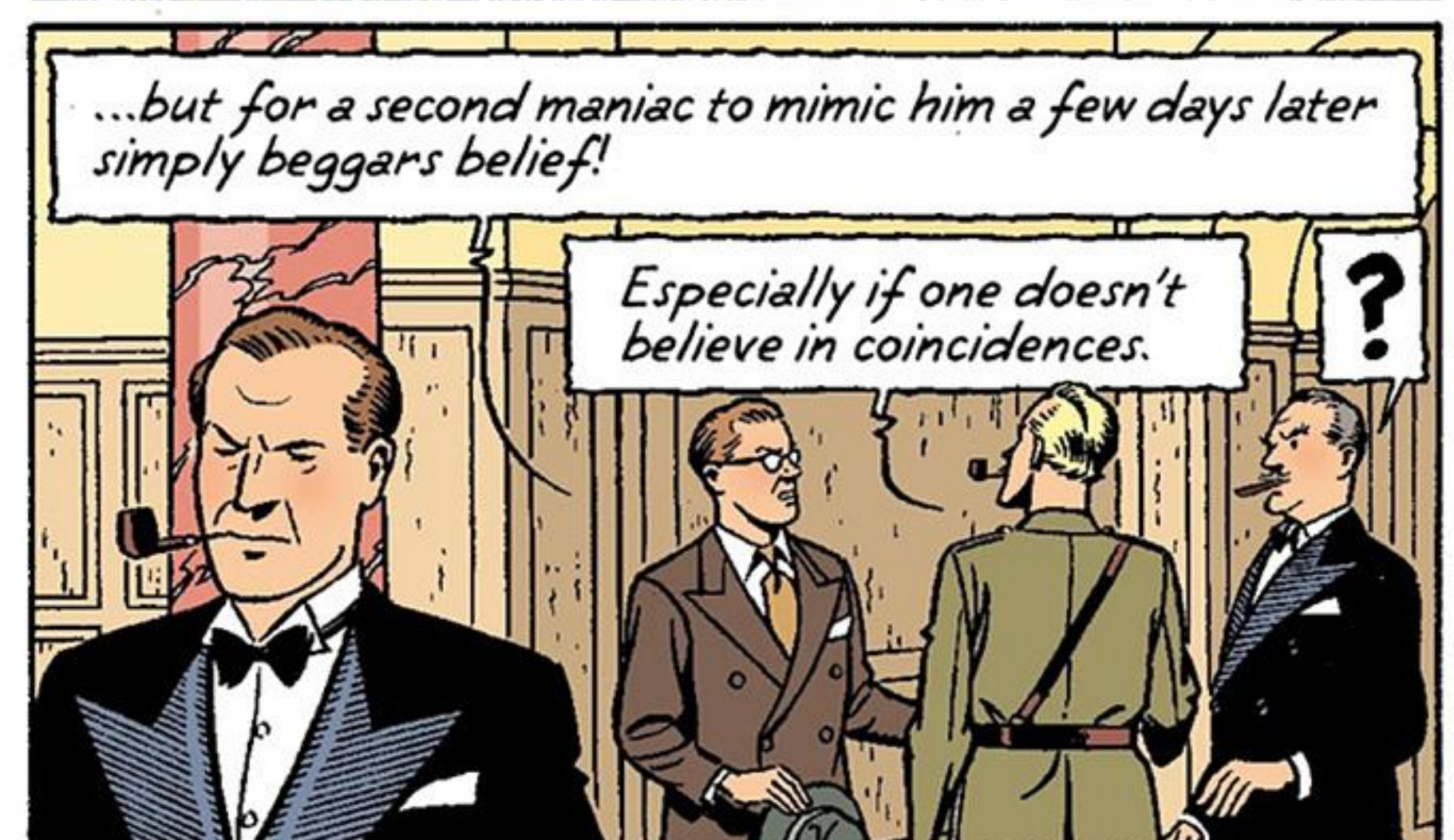
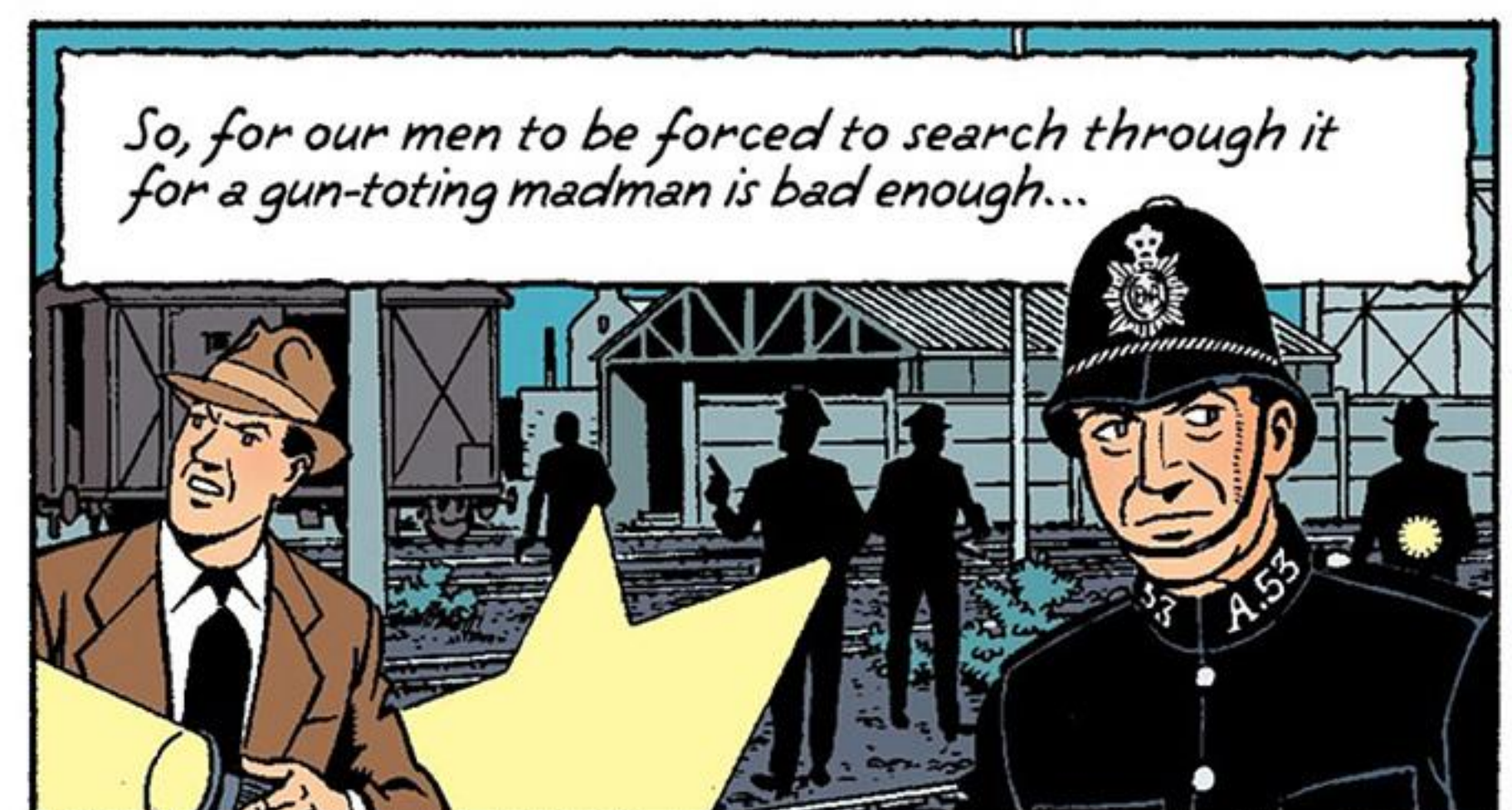
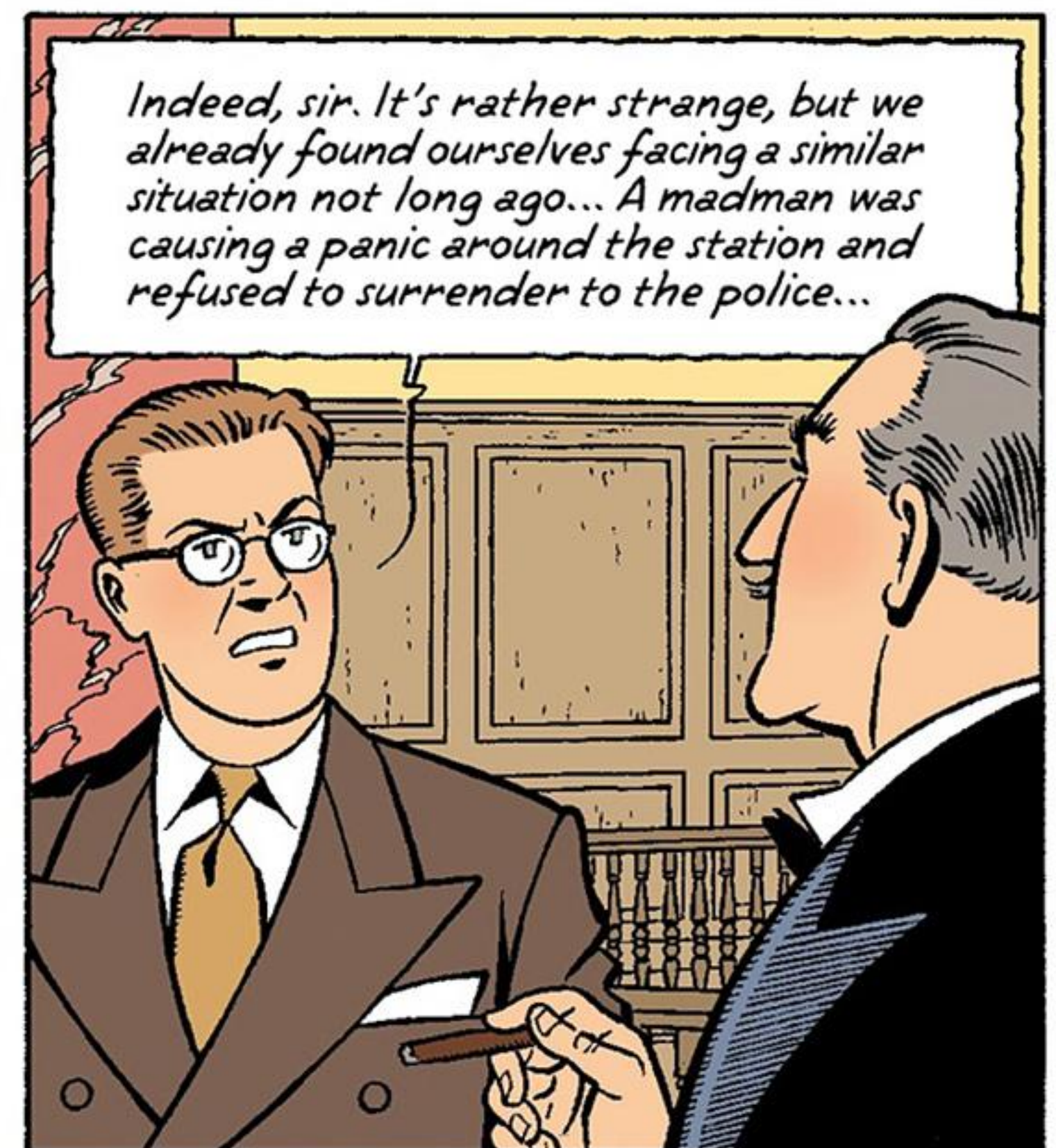
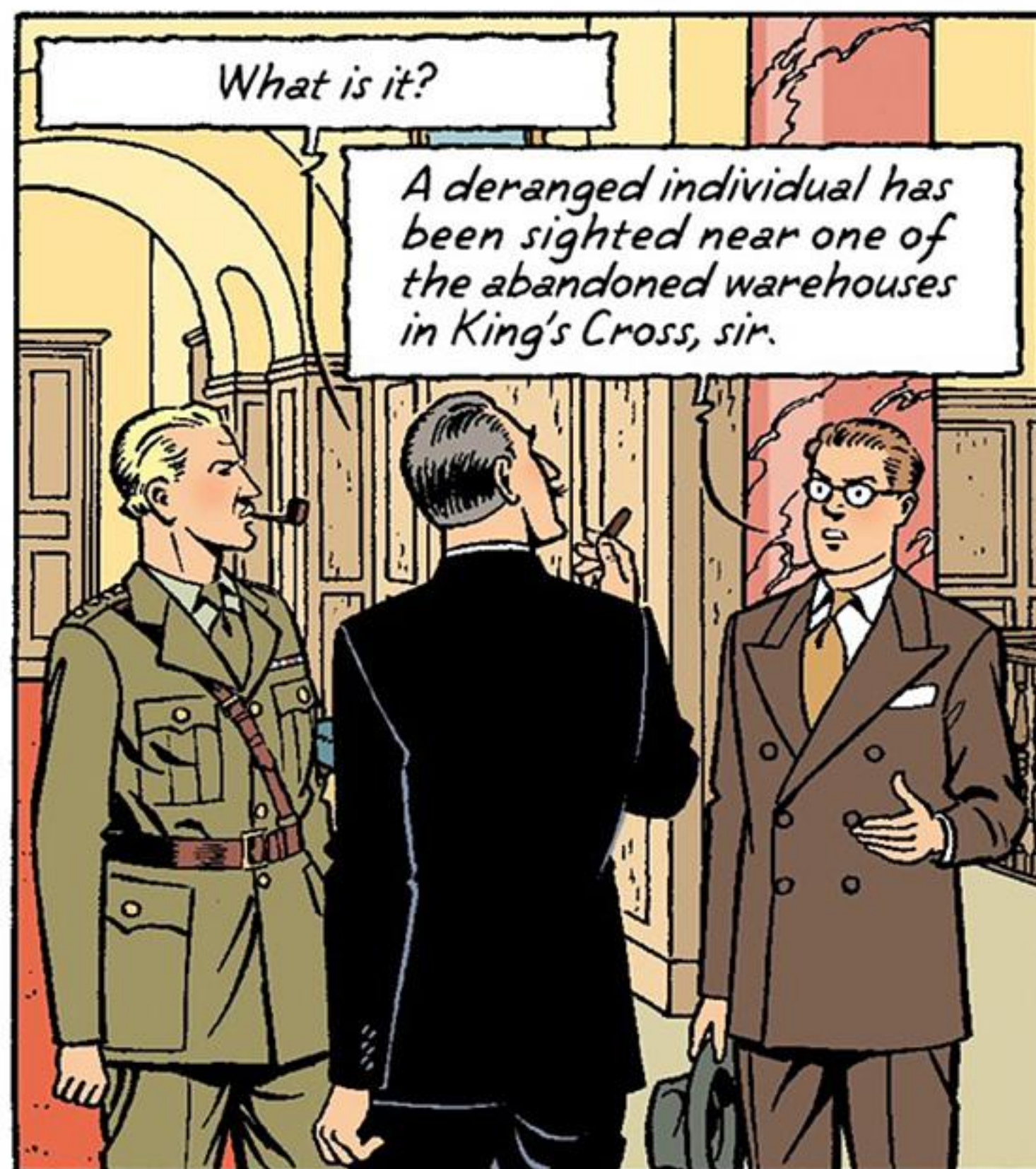
The colonel is a very complex personality. I don't know how much help I can be...



I'm afraid you have little choice, Master. We're very much counting on your assistance...







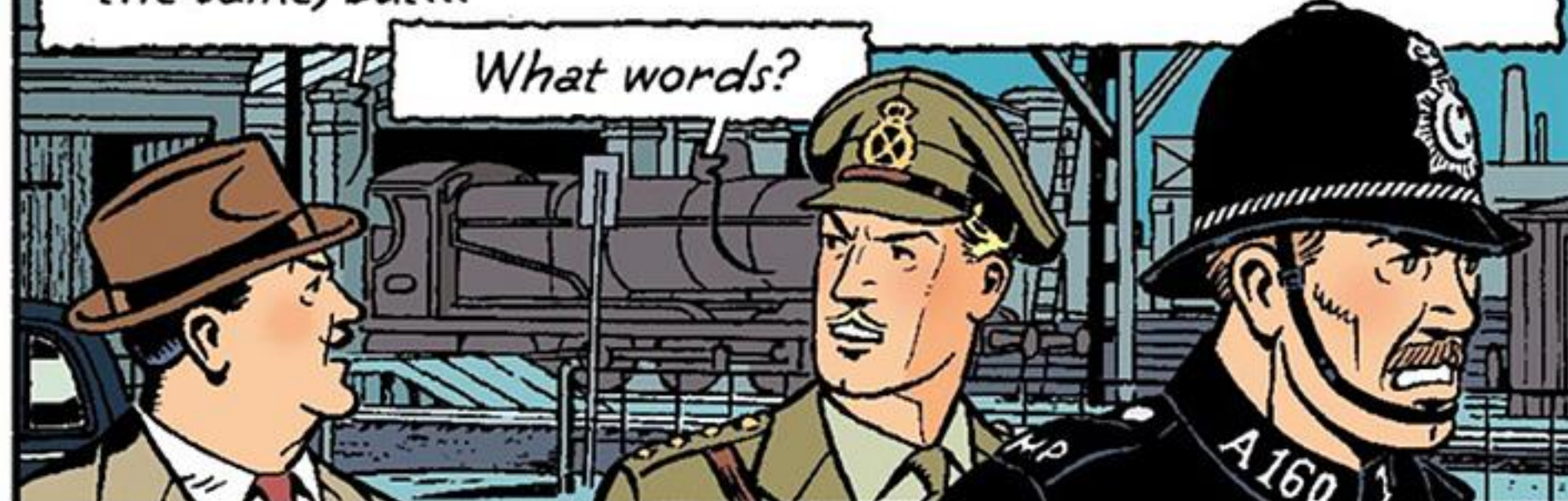
INDEED, UPON ARRIVING ON SITE, BLAKE IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVES THE TENSION AND WORRY AMONG THE POLICEMEN TASKED WITH CAPTURING THE MADMAN. OBVIOUSLY, THE SITUATION ISN'T UNDER CONTROL YET...



So? Where do we stand?

I've requested reinforcements, sir...

So far, establishing a dialogue's been impossible. The man refuses to surrender. Occasionally he cries out — things we don't understand at all... The words are clear, always the same, but...



What words?

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR CLOVER HURRIEDLY PULLS A SMALL NOTEBOOK OUT OF HIS POCKET.



Er... I wrote them down, sir... It's complete nonsense!... 'Hail to you, oh most powerful, most wise and most learned... Your radiant genius will strike us all... For we are unworthy of your greatness...'

Sounds like gobbledegook to me, sir...

Rather strange, indeed. And yet I have the feeling I've heard or read a chant like this before...



BUT BLAKE'S ATTEMPTS TO REMEMBER ARE INTERRUPTED BY A POLICEMAN RUNNING TO THEM WITH NEWS.



Sir!... Sir!... He's out of ammo!... He's just thrown down his weapon.

At last!...

EVERYONE RUSHES FORWARD...



Let's go! He can't escape now!

Hold your fire!

I want him alive!



AS IF POSSESSED BY A SUPERIOR FORCE, OUT OF CONTROL, THE HUNTED MAN SPRINTS TOWARDS ONE OF THE DISUSED WAREHOUSES.



HE ATTEMPTS TO OPEN THE HEAVY DOORS, BUT IN VAIN, DEFEATED BY THE SOLID PADLOCKS...

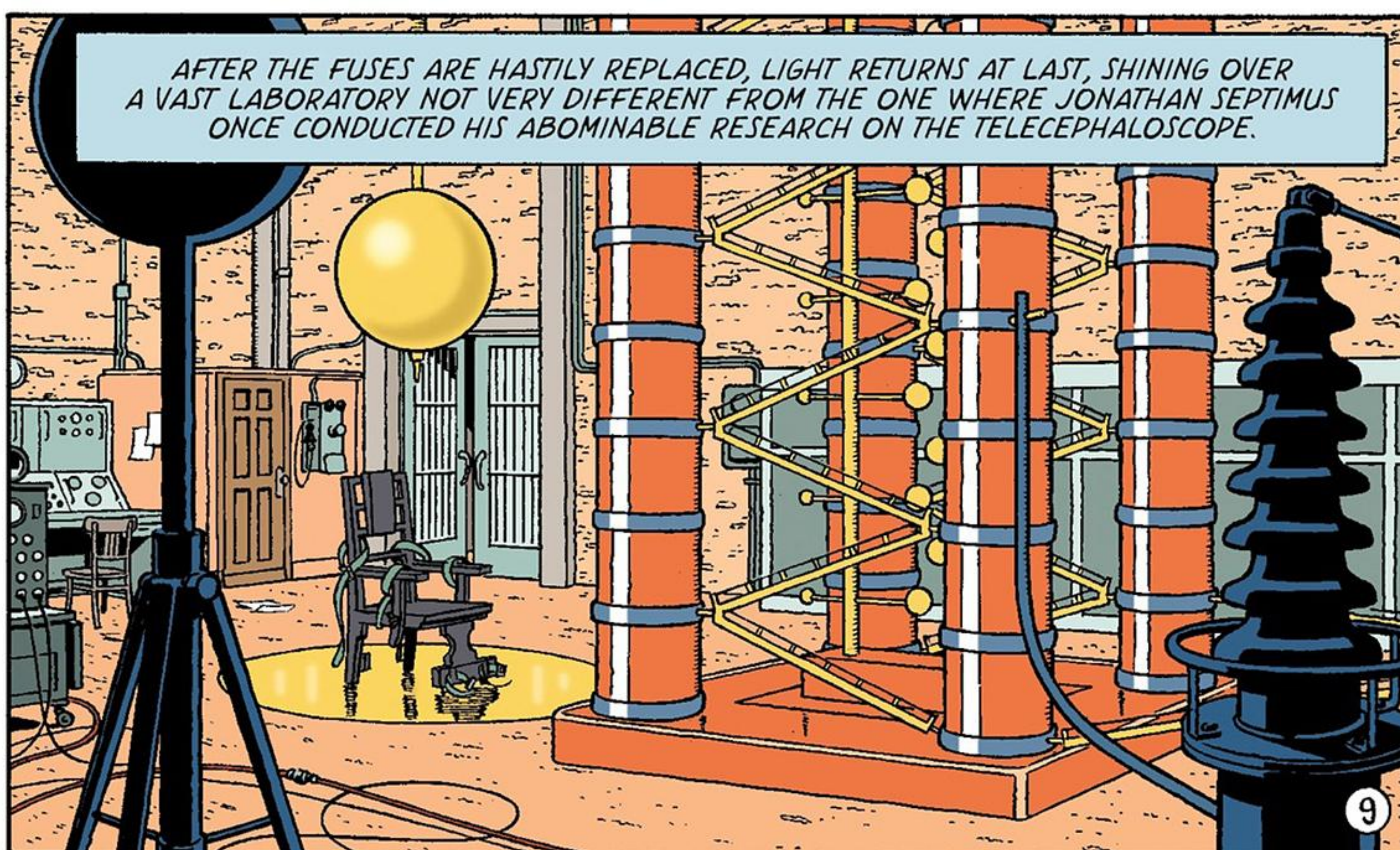
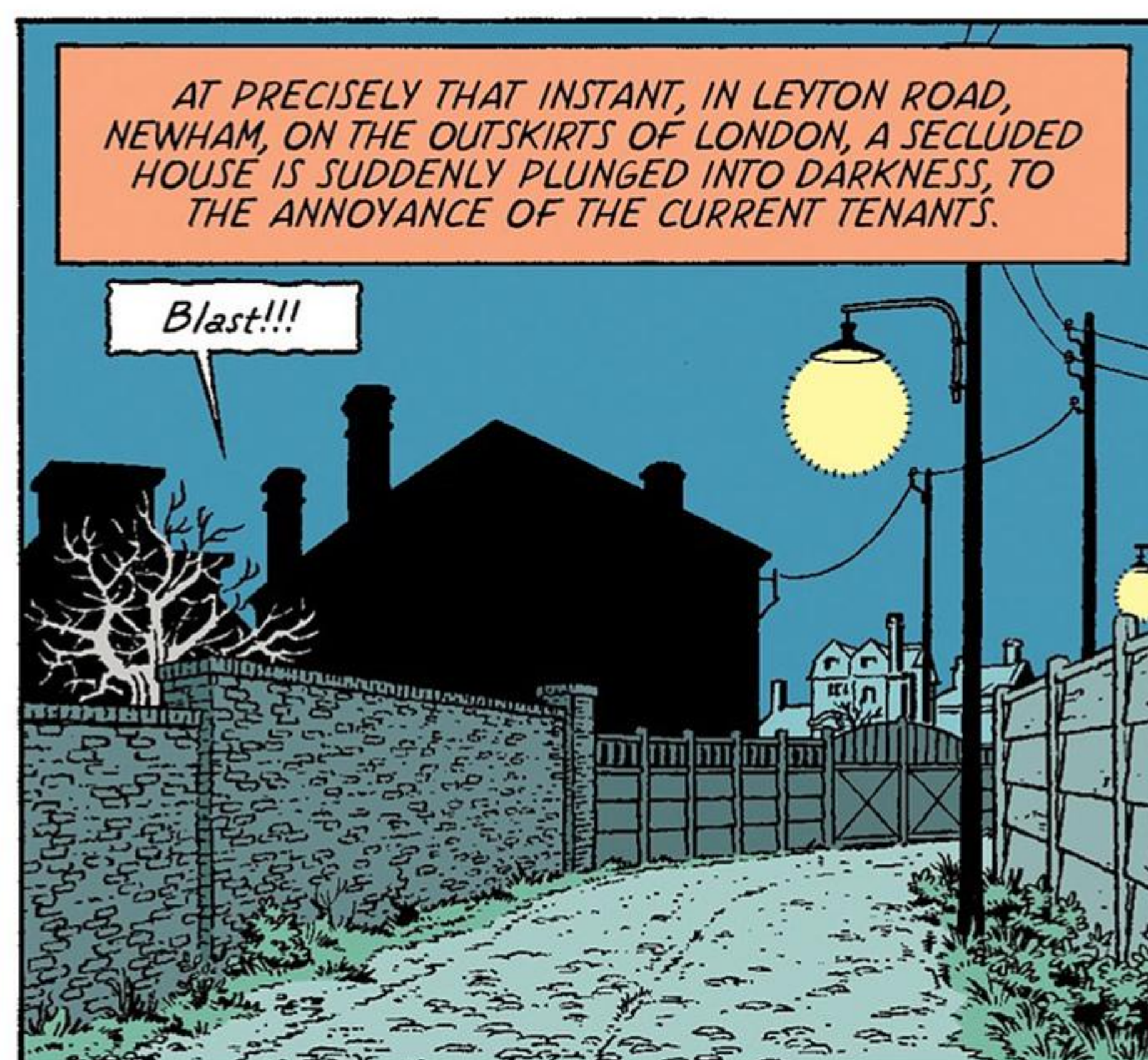
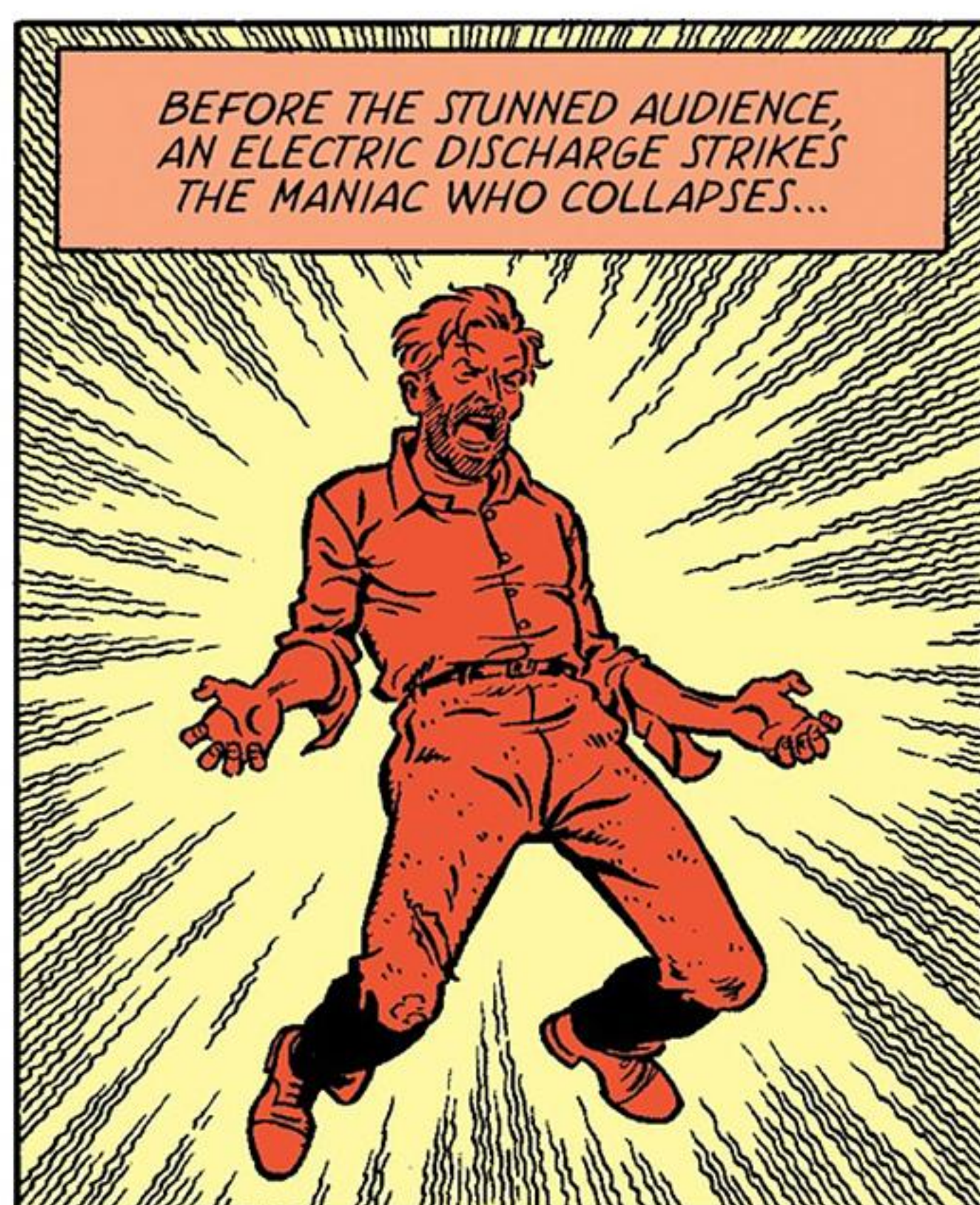
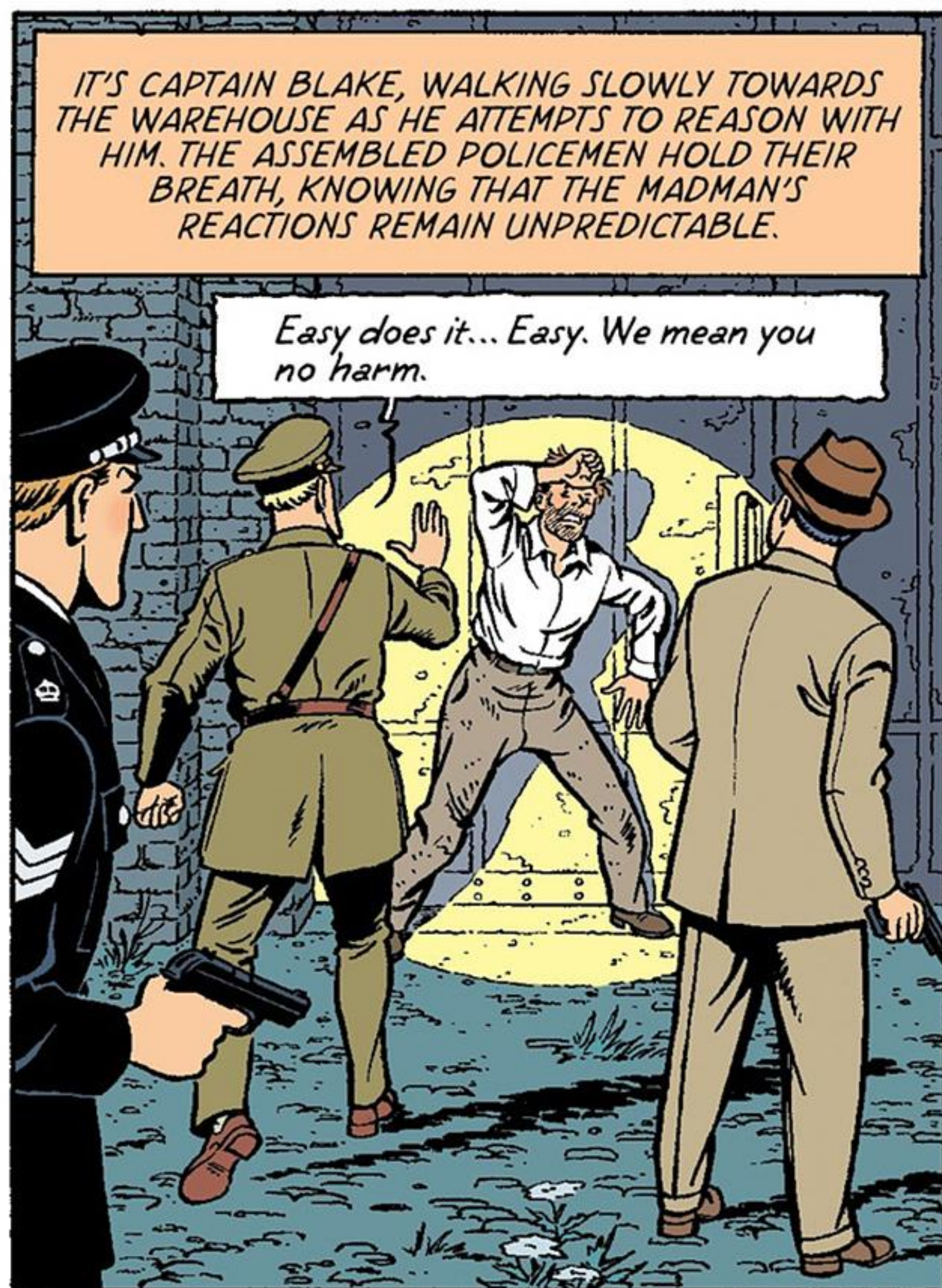


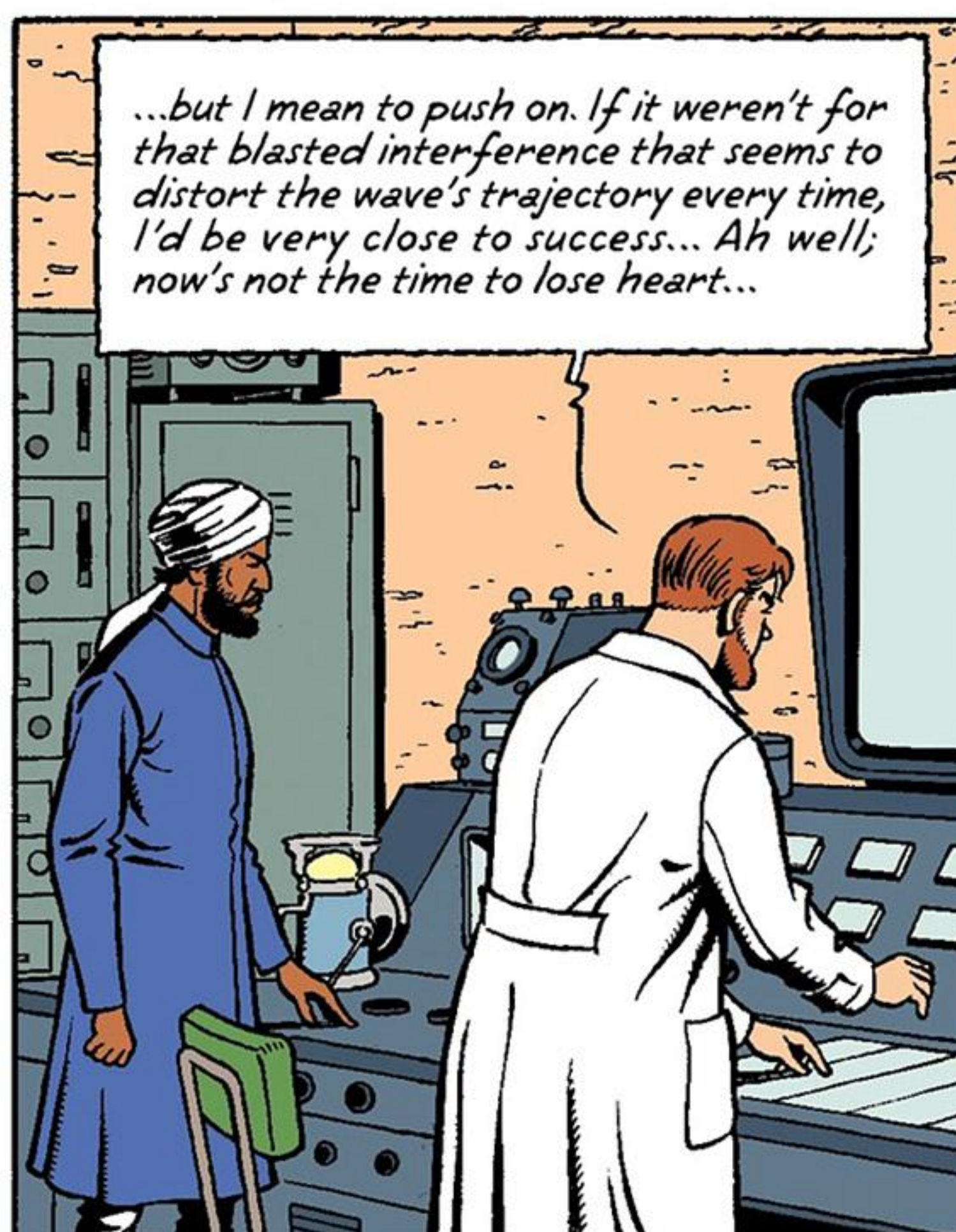
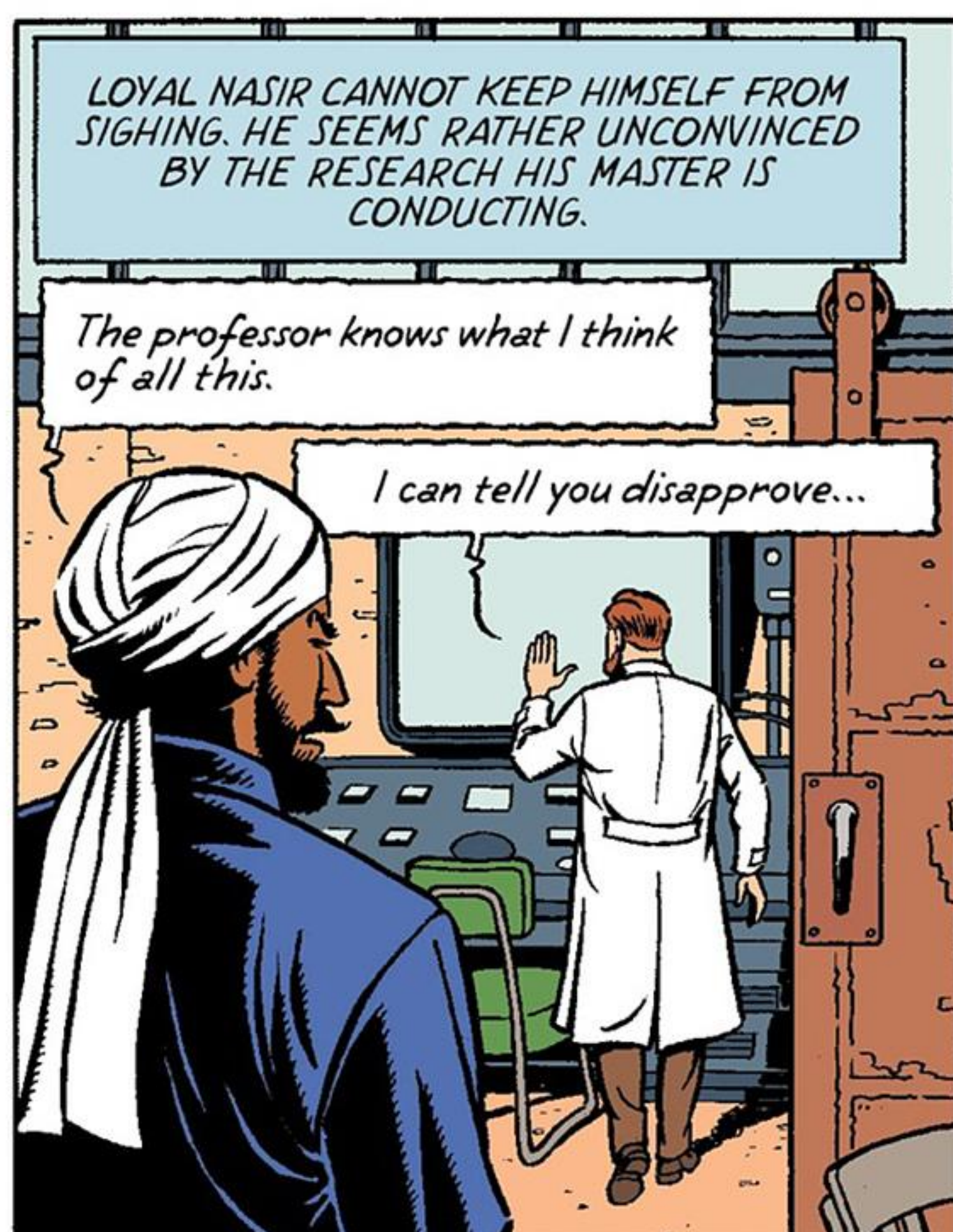
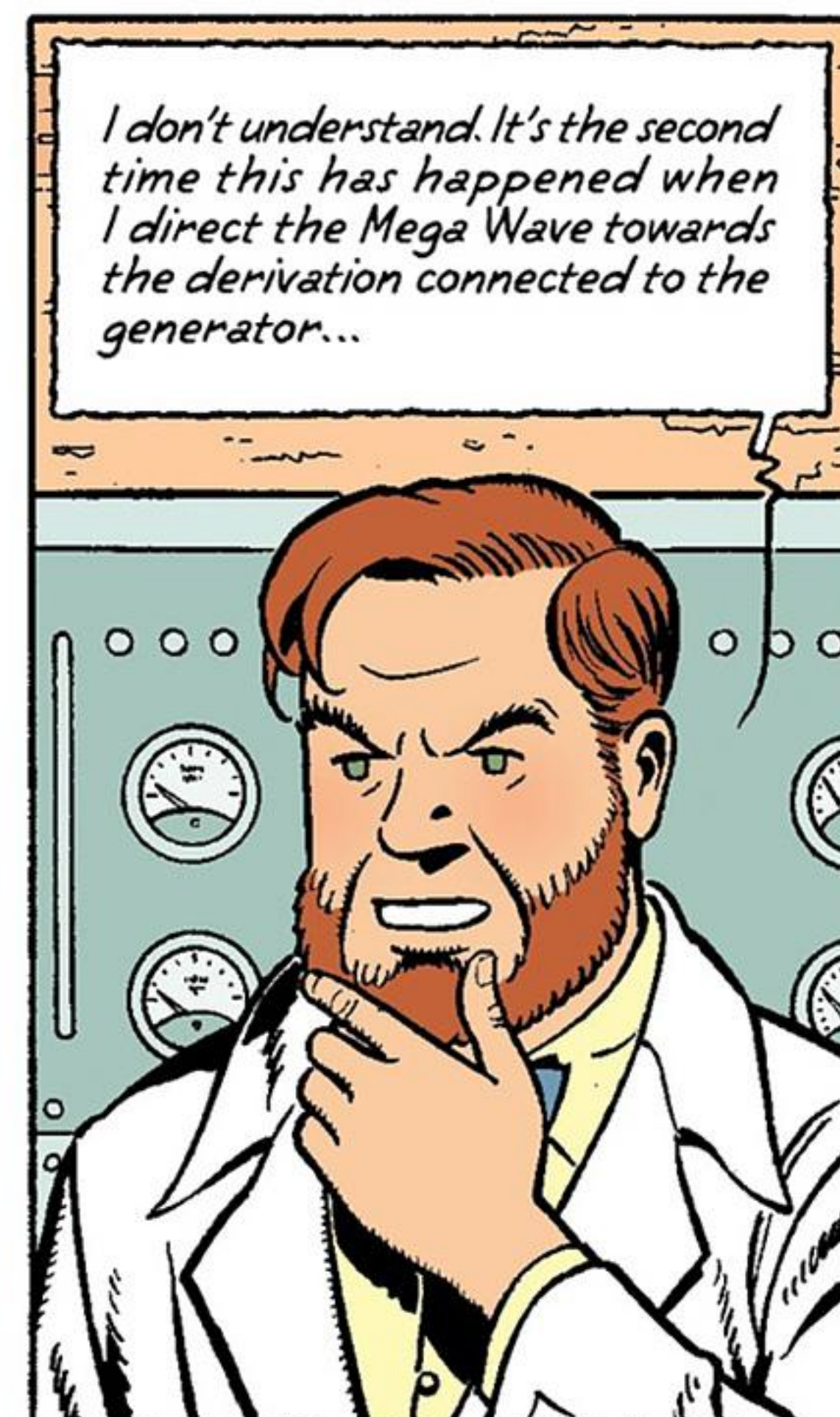
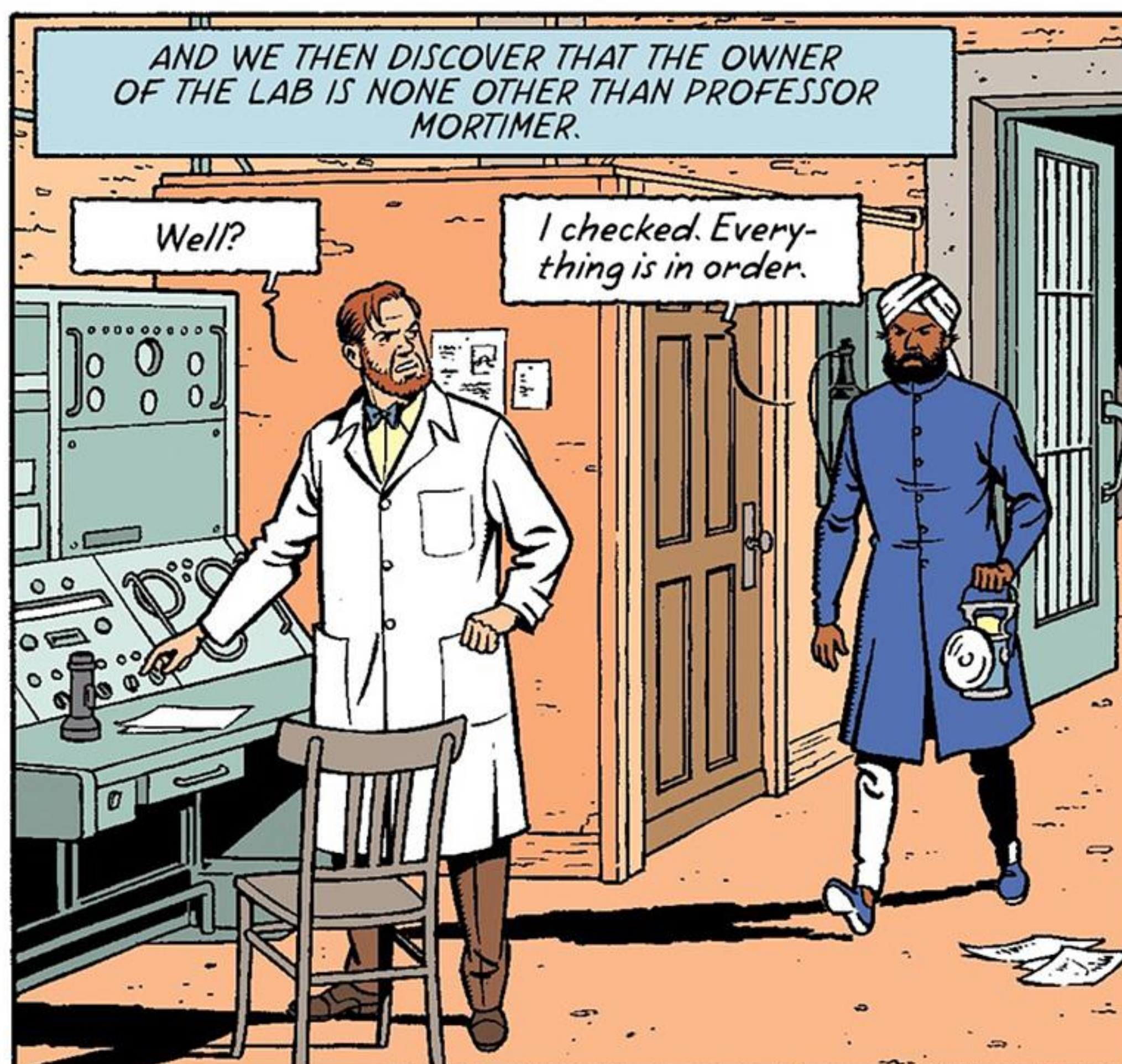
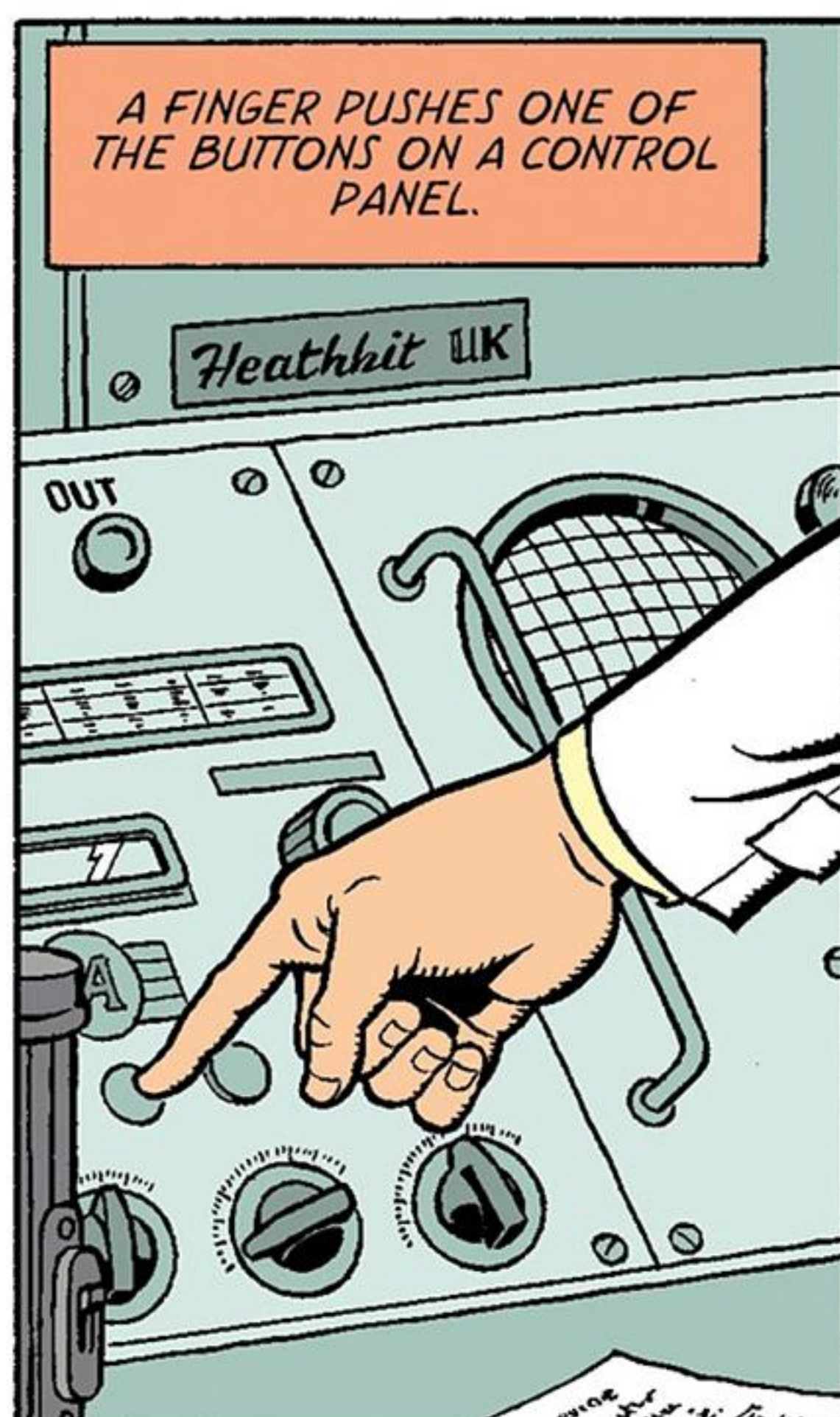
Sanctuary!... Sanctuary!!!

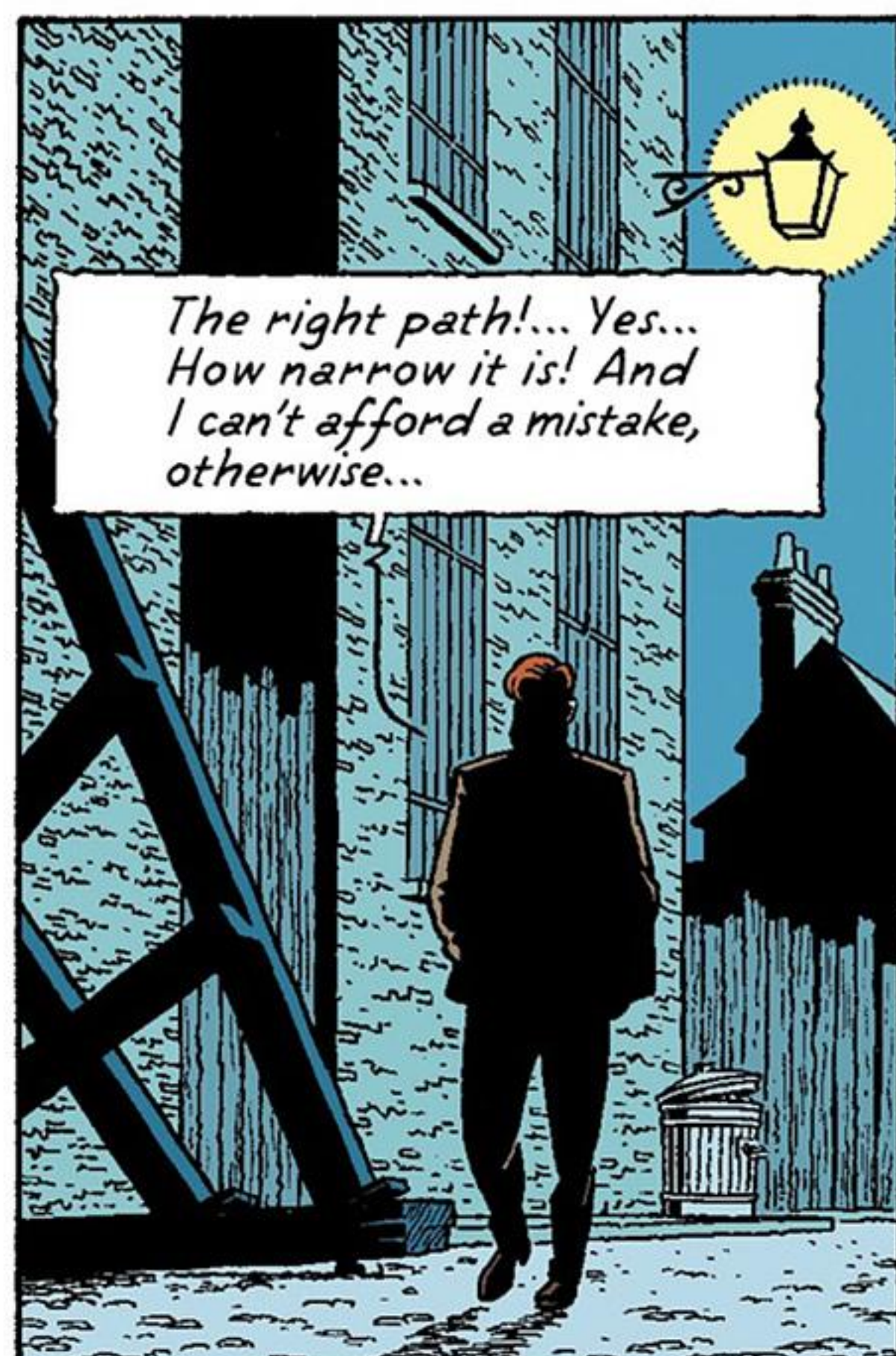
THEN IT'S THE END. THE MAN IS CAUGHT IN THE YELLOW BEAM OF A SEARCHLIGHT AS A VOICE CALLS OUT TO HIM.

It's over now! Be a good fellow and surrender!

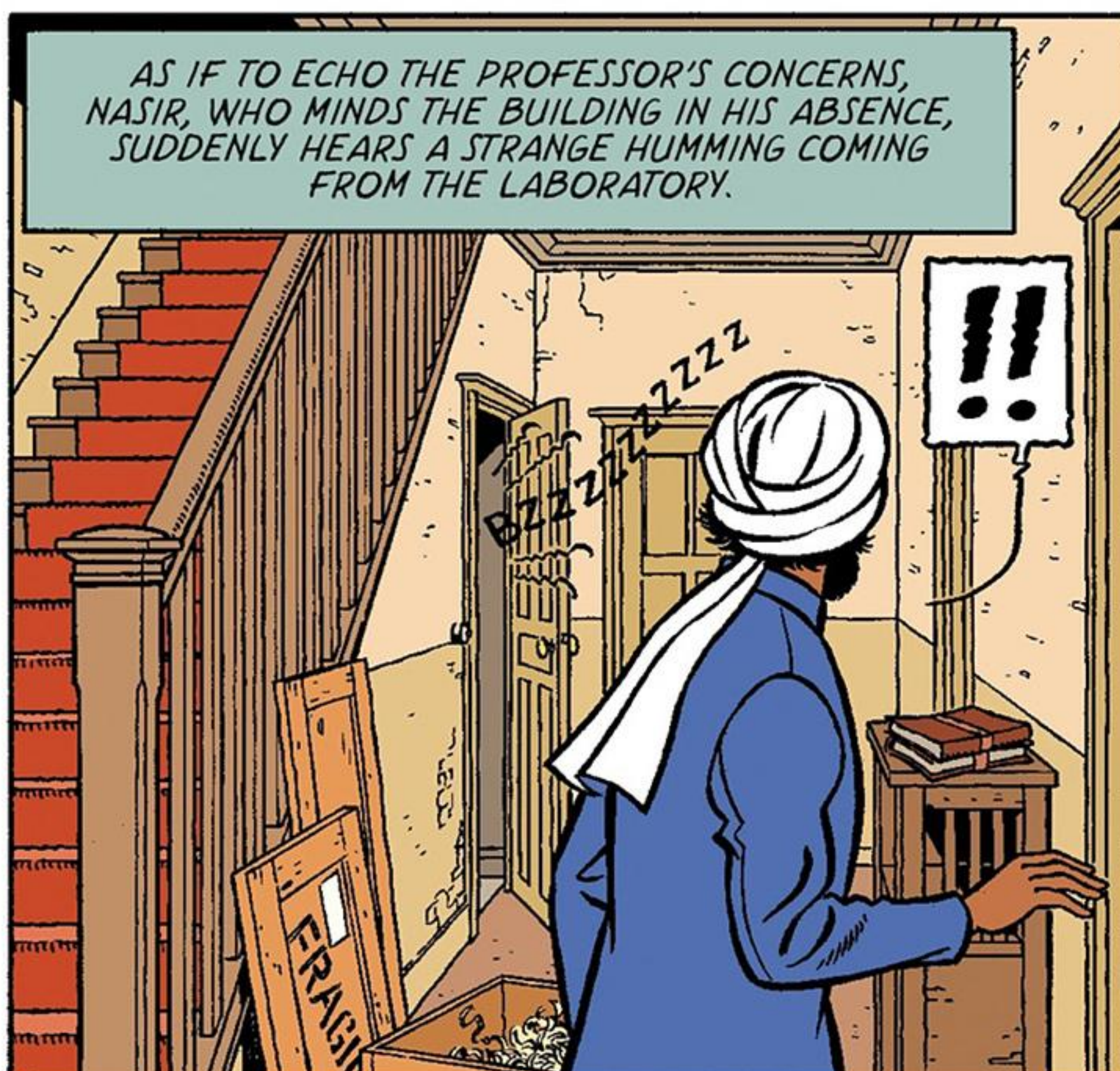








The right path!... Yes...
How narrow it is! And
I can't afford a mistake,
otherwise...



AS IF TO ECHO THE PROFESSOR'S CONCERNS,
NASIR, WHO MINDS THE BUILDING IN HIS ABSENCE,
SUDDENLY HEARS A STRANGE HUMMING COMING
FROM THE LABORATORY.

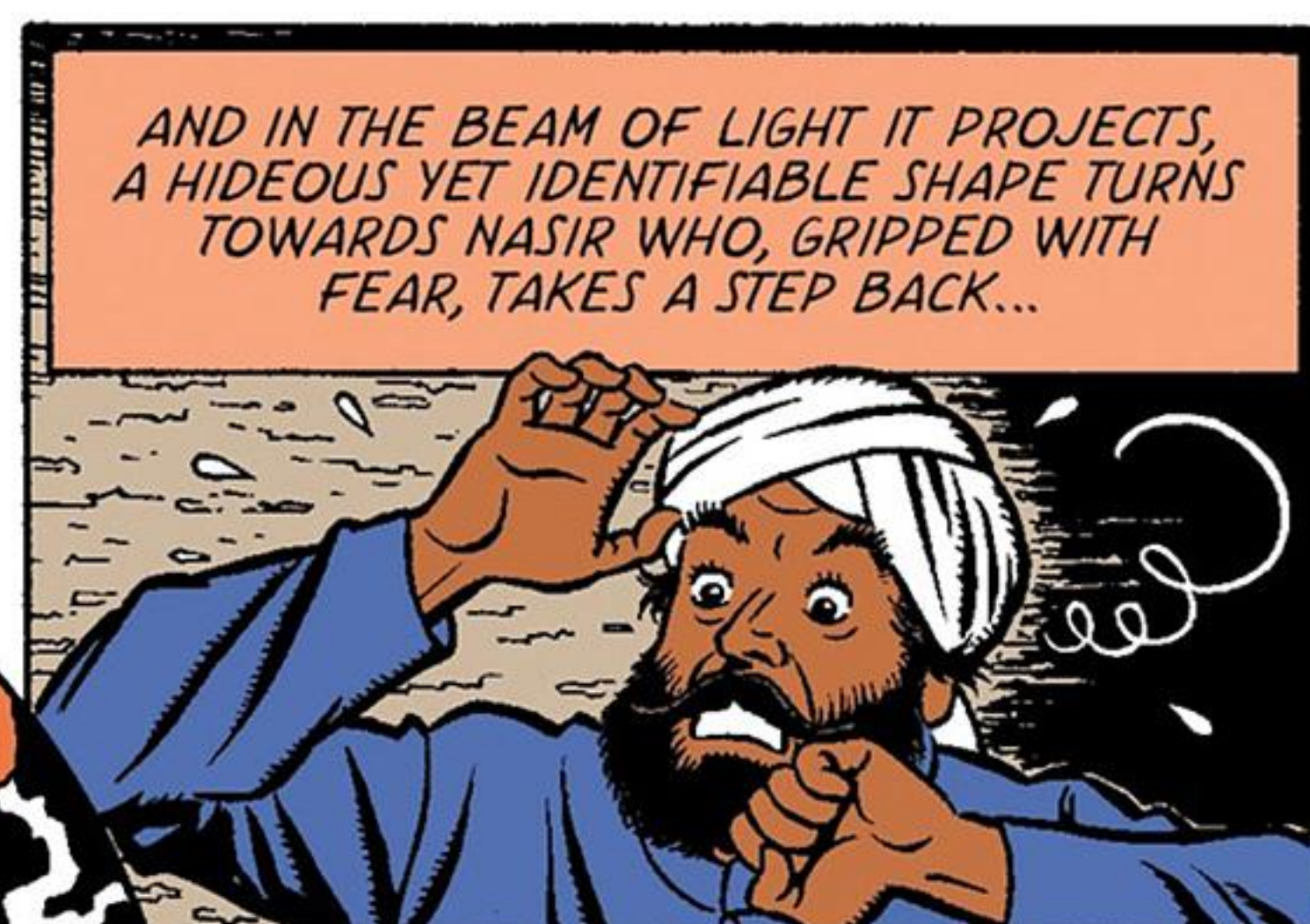
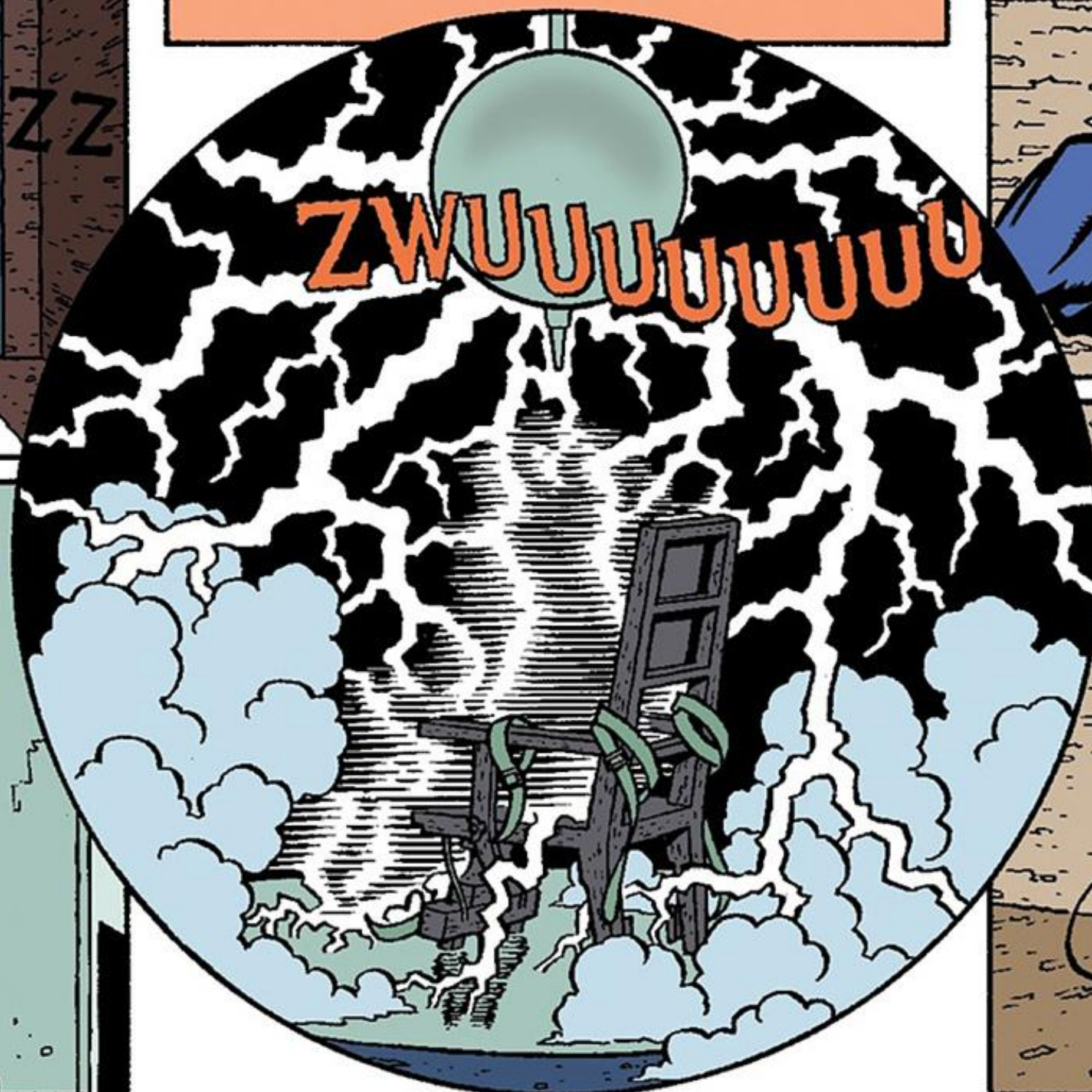


SURPRISED, HE HEADS DOWN
THE STAIRS TO THE CELLAR...



...AND DISCOVERS A BRIGHT LIGHT
BLAZING BEHIND THE LABORATORY'S
HEAVY GLAZED DOOR.

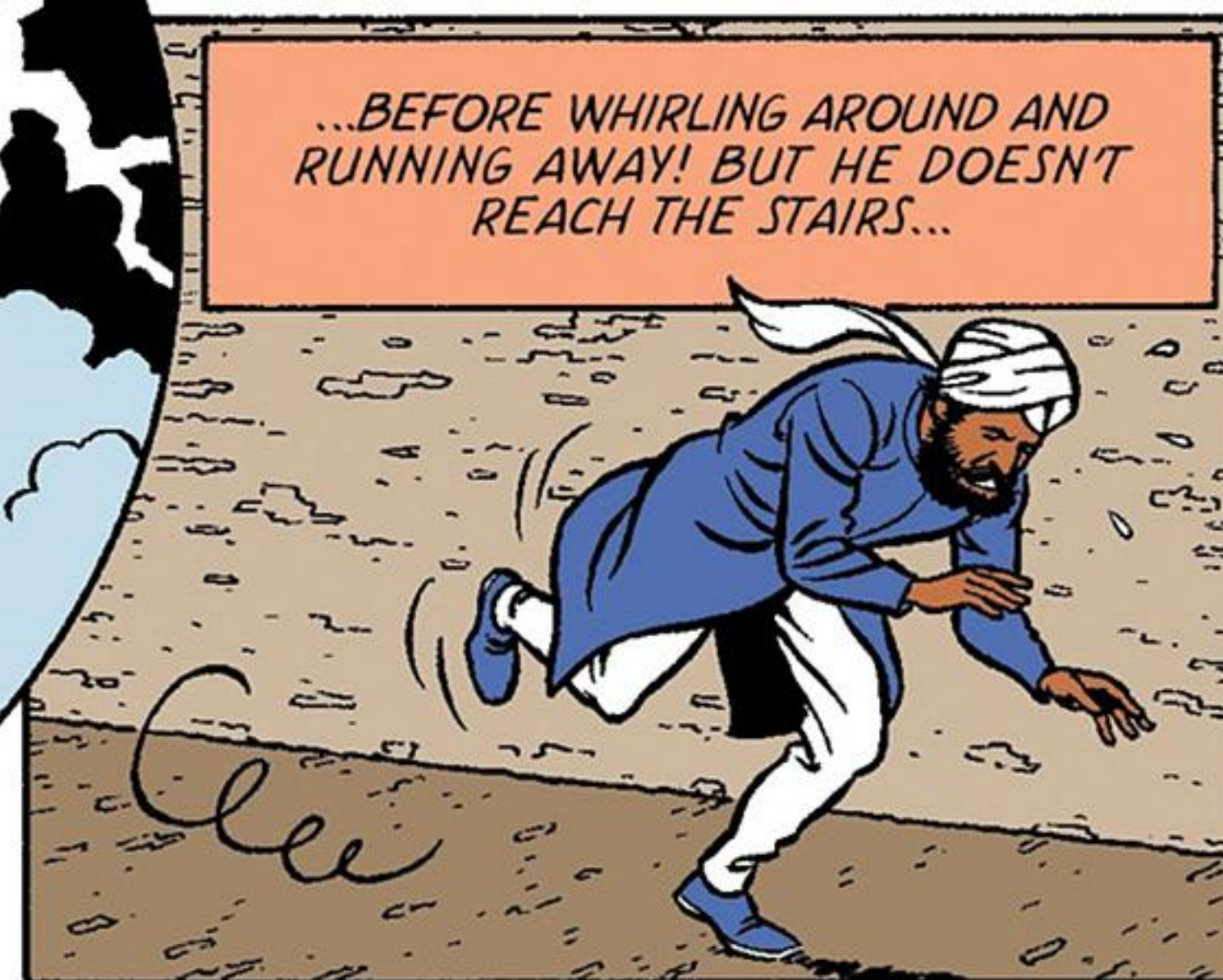
WITHOUT ANYONE TOUCHING
THE COMMAND CONSOLE, THE COPPER
SPHERE HAS BEEN ACTIVATED, EMITTING
AN INCREASINGLY EAR-SPLITTING
BUZZING!



AND IN THE BEAM OF LIGHT IT PROJECTS,
A HIDEOUS YET IDENTIFIABLE SHAPE TURNS
TOWARDS NASIR WHO, GRIPPED WITH
FEAR, TAKES A STEP BACK...



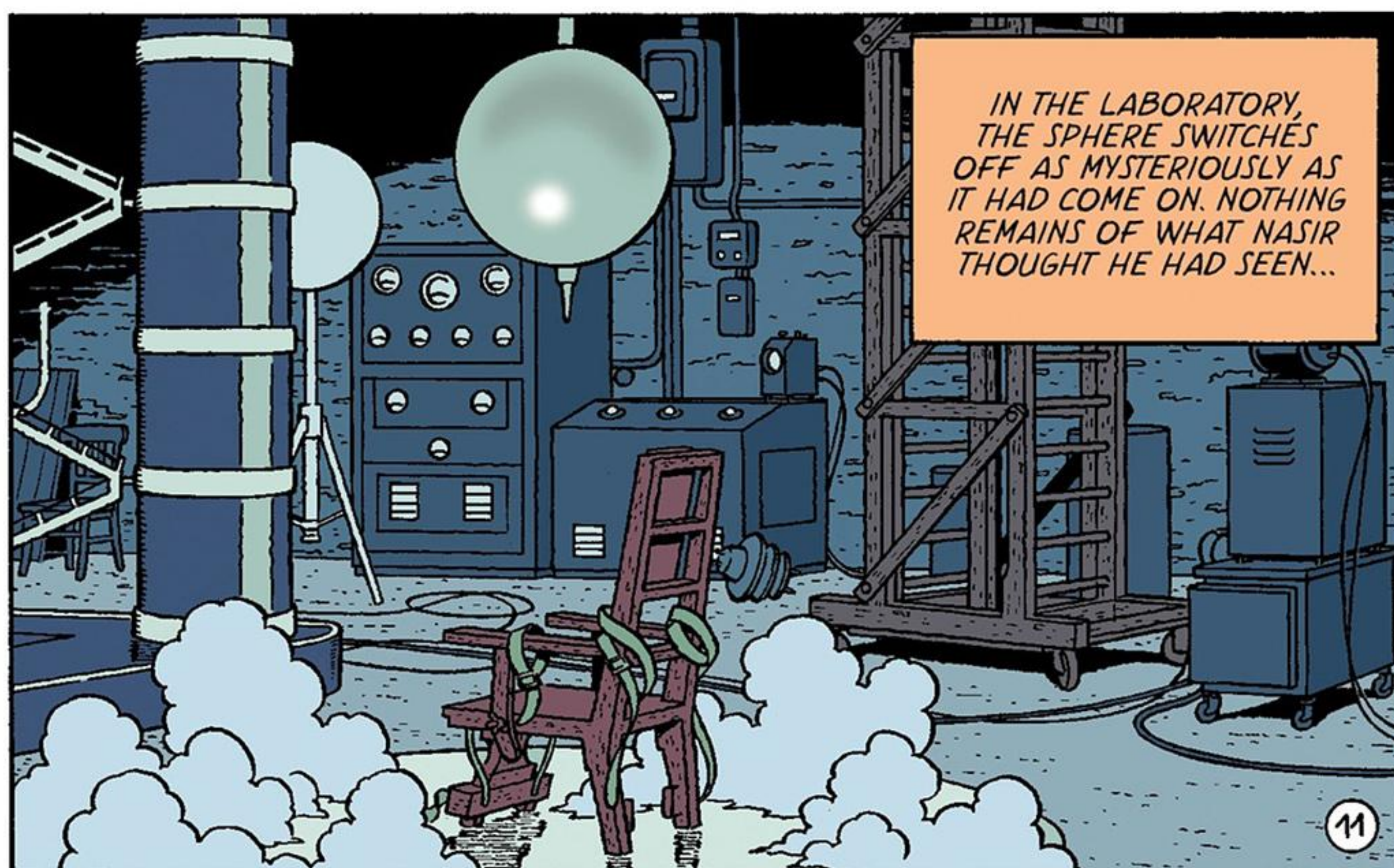
CAUTIOUSLY OPENING THE DOOR,
HE FREEZES, STUNNED BY THE SIGHT
BEFORE HIM...



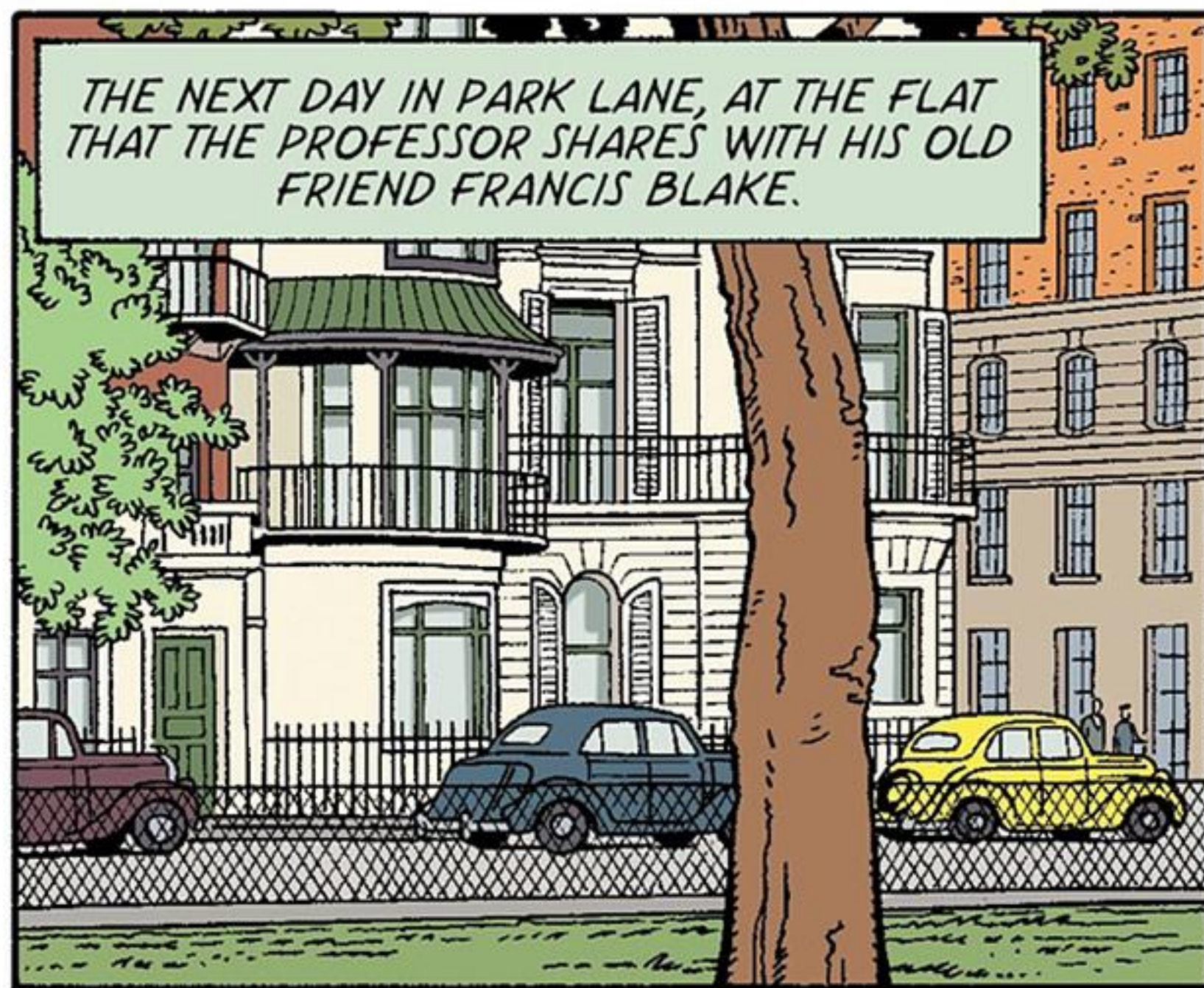
...BEFORE WHIRLING AROUND AND
RUNNING AWAY! BUT HE DOESN'T
REACH THE STAIRS...



THE LOYAL
MANSERVANT
COLLAPSES, AS
IF INSTANTLY
DRAINED OF
ALL STRENGTH.



IN THE LABORATORY,
THE SPHERE SWITCHES
OFF AS MYSTERIOUSLY AS
IT HAD COME ON. NOTHING
REMAINS OF WHAT NASIR
THOUGHT HE HAD SEEN...

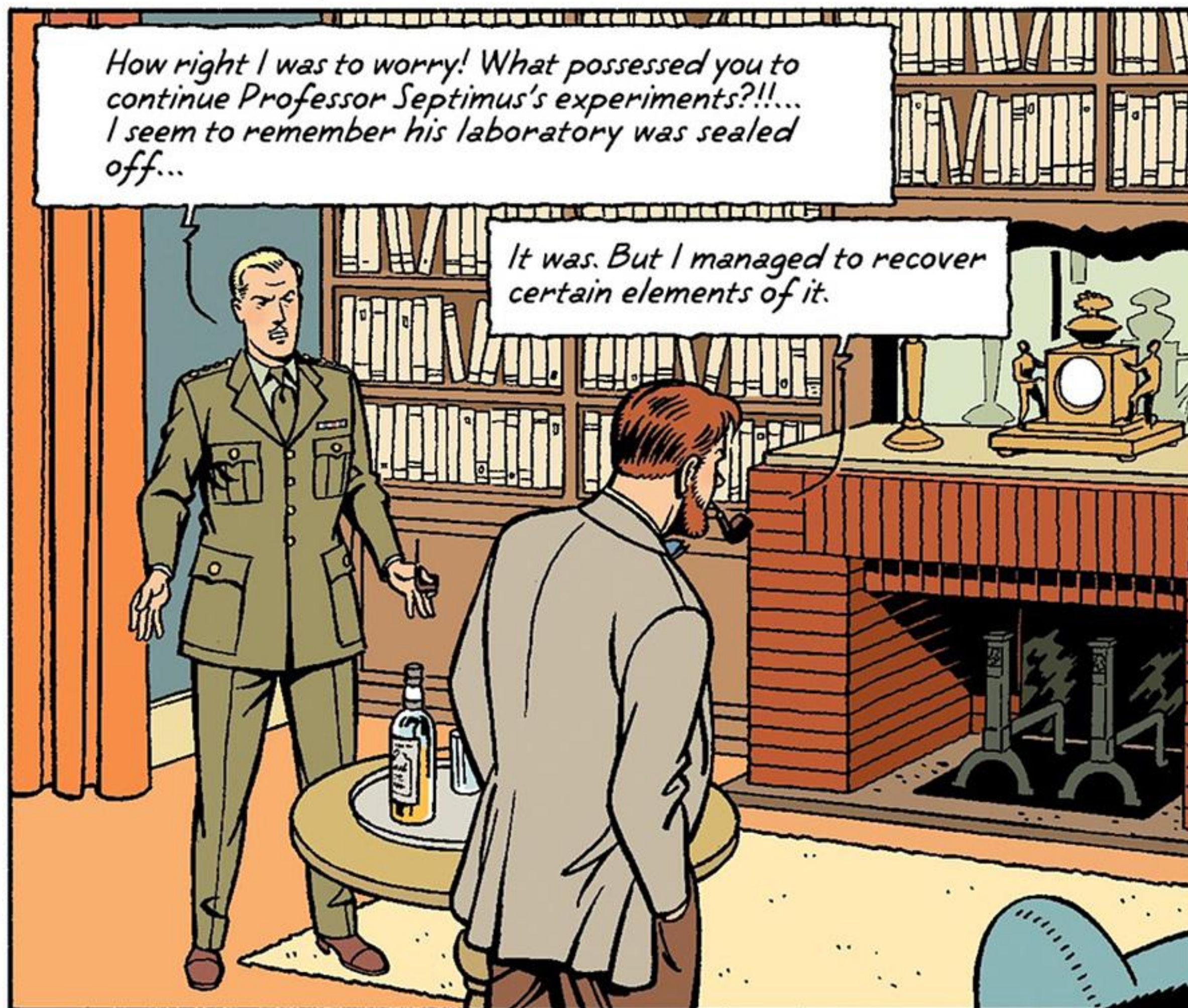


THE NEXT DAY IN PARK LANE, AT THE FLAT THAT THE PROFESSOR SHARES WITH HIS OLD FRIEND FRANCIS BLAKE.



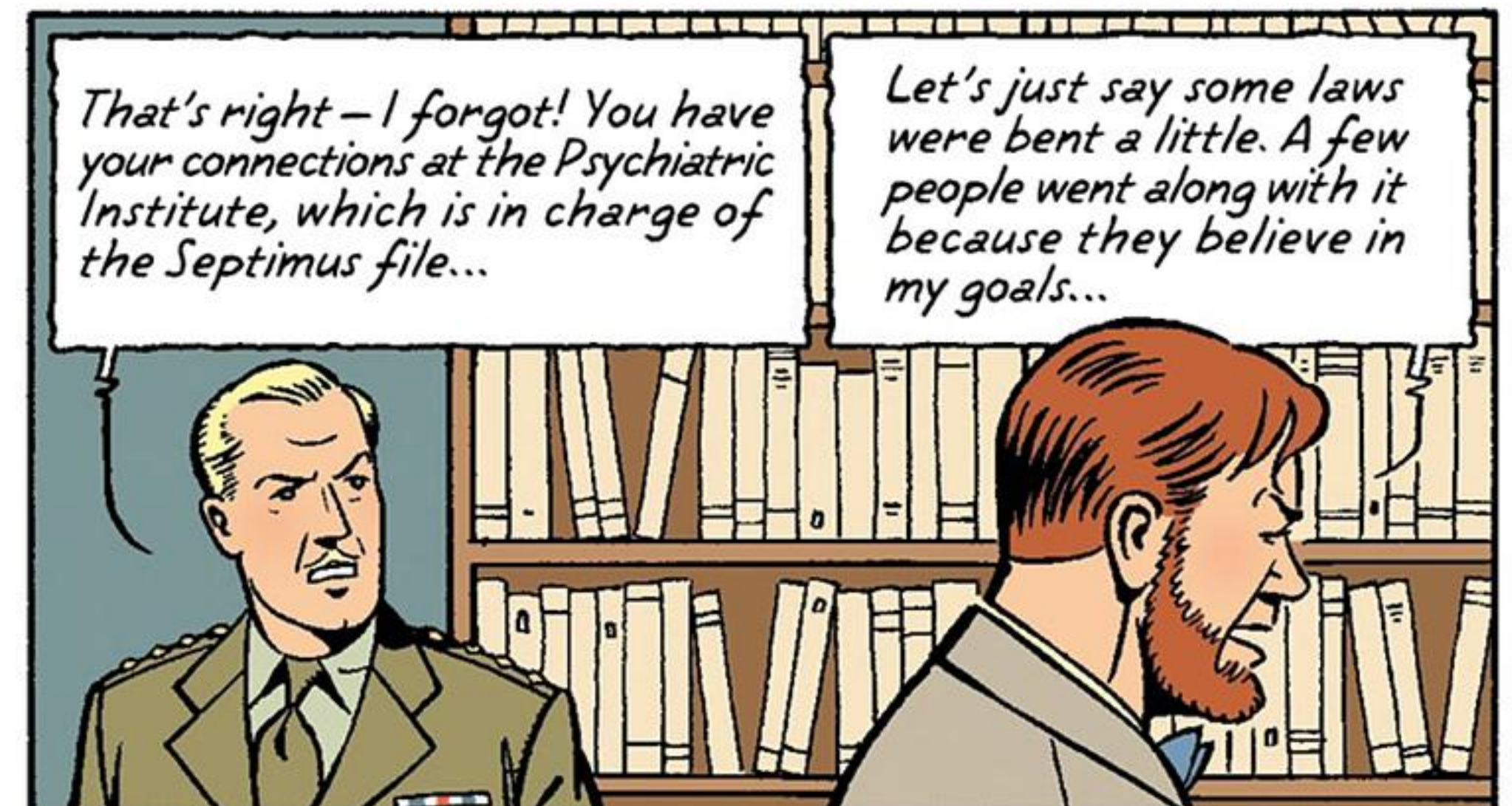
MRS BENSON, THE LANDLADY, SOFTLY CLOSES THE DOOR TO THE FLAT. THE GOOD LADY SEEMS ALMOST AFRAID. THE TWO FRIENDS ARE SEEING EACH OTHER AGAIN AFTER A RATHER LONG TIME APART, AND THE MOOD IS SOMEWHAT STORMY.

This is insane!



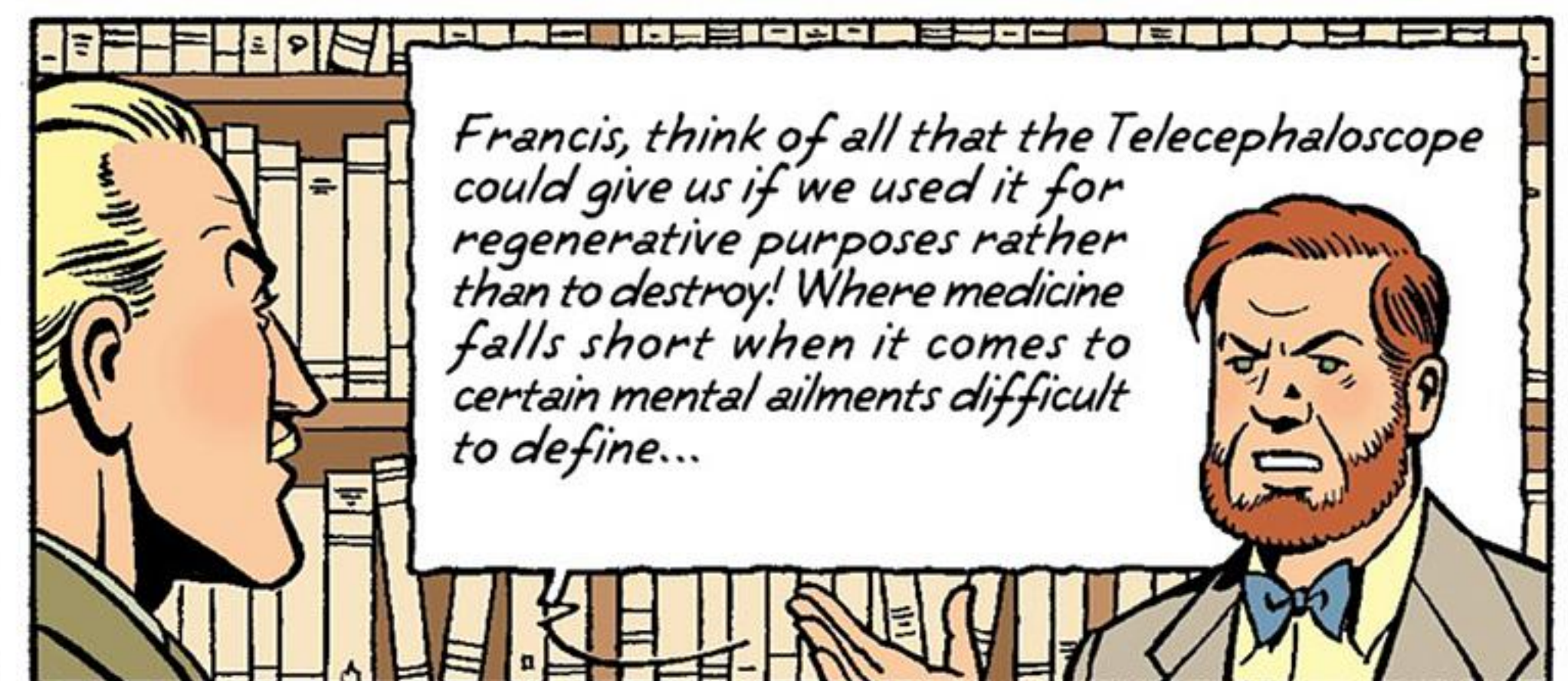
How right I was to worry! What possessed you to continue Professor Septimus's experiments?!... I seem to remember his laboratory was sealed off...

It was. But I managed to recover certain elements of it.



That's right - I forgot! You have your connections at the Psychiatric Institute, which is in charge of the Septimus file...

Let's just say some laws were bent a little. A few people went along with it because they believe in my goals...

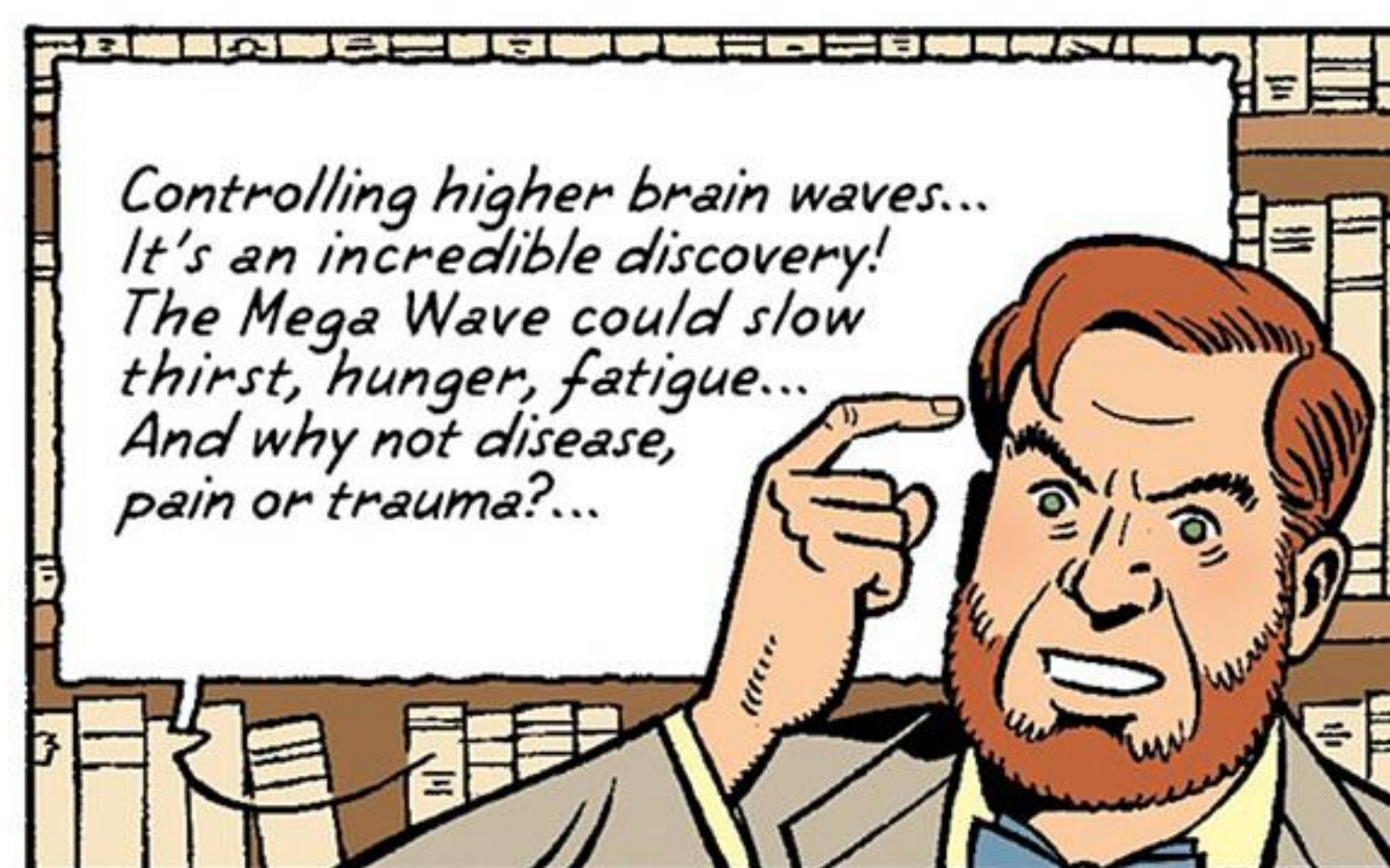


Francis, think of all that the Telecephaloscope could give us if we used it for regenerative purposes rather than to destroy! Where medicine falls short when it comes to certain mental ailments difficult to define...

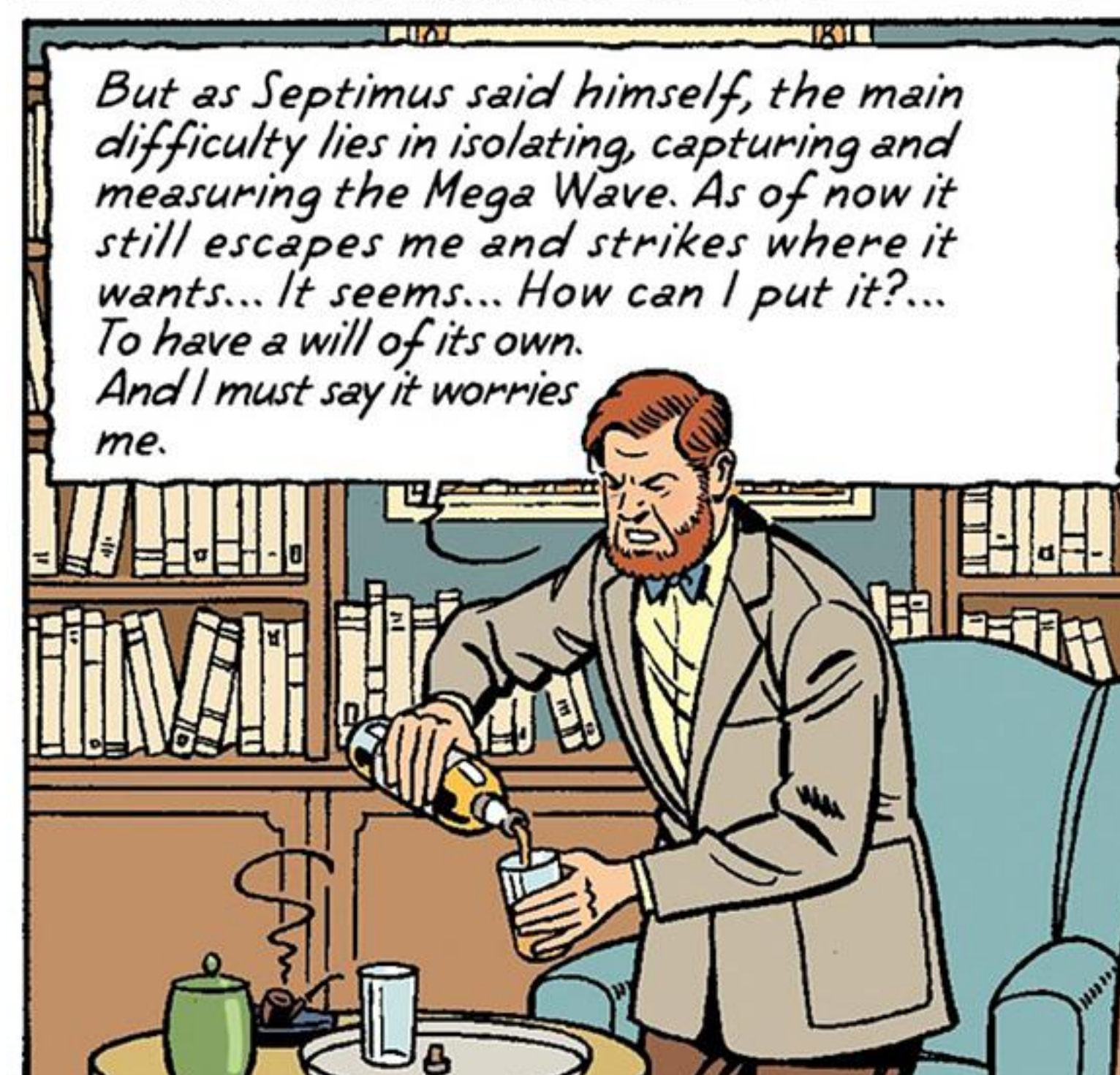


...the Mega Wave can intervene by acting directly on the brain, by imparting new strength on the nervous system that commands all the body's defences.

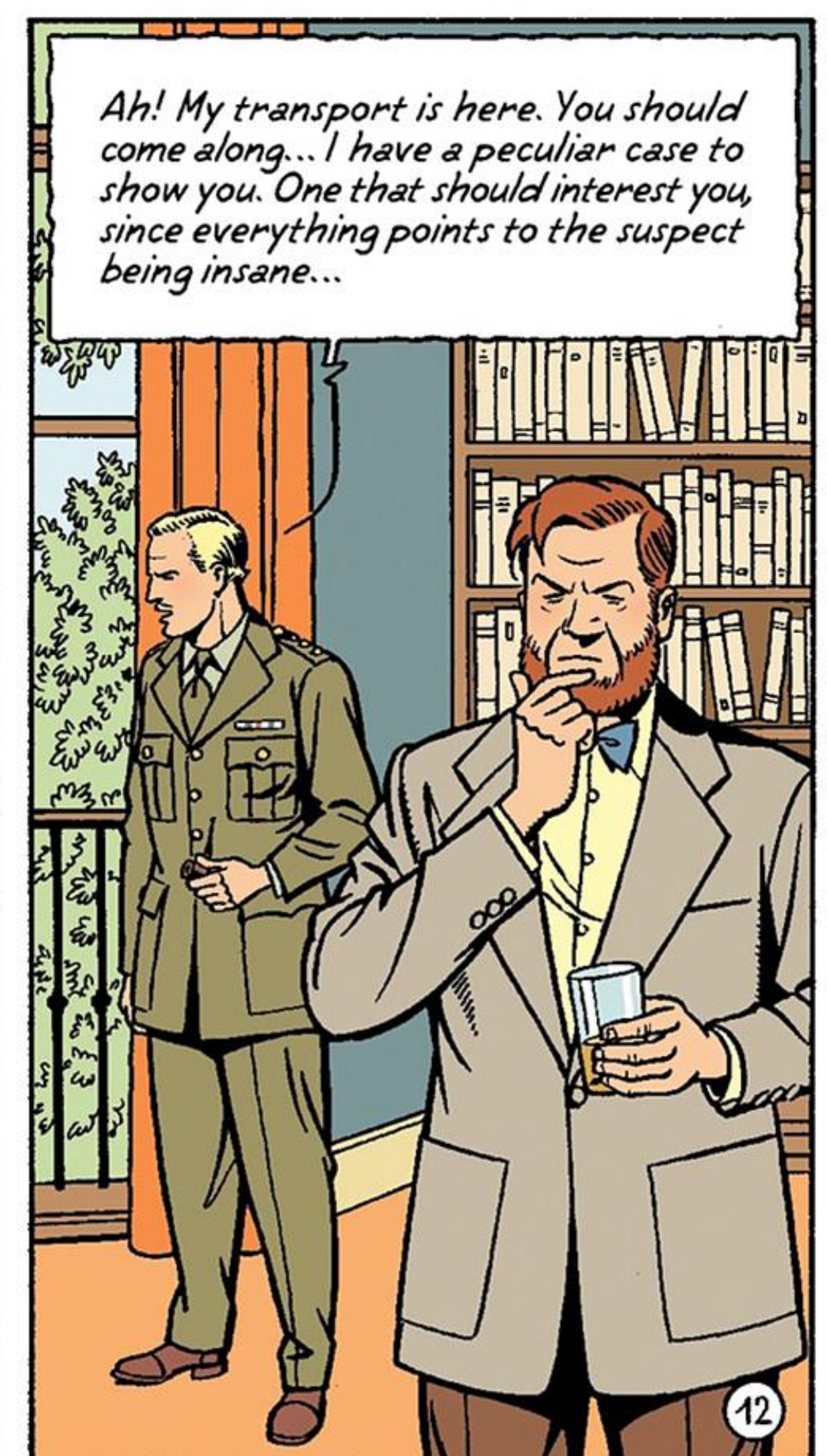
Good grief! It sounds like you're advocating the old way of calming madmen with magnetic passes! Charcot's* a thing of the past, old boy!



Controlling higher brain waves... It's an incredible discovery! The Mega Wave could slow thirst, hunger, fatigue... And why not disease, pain or trauma?...

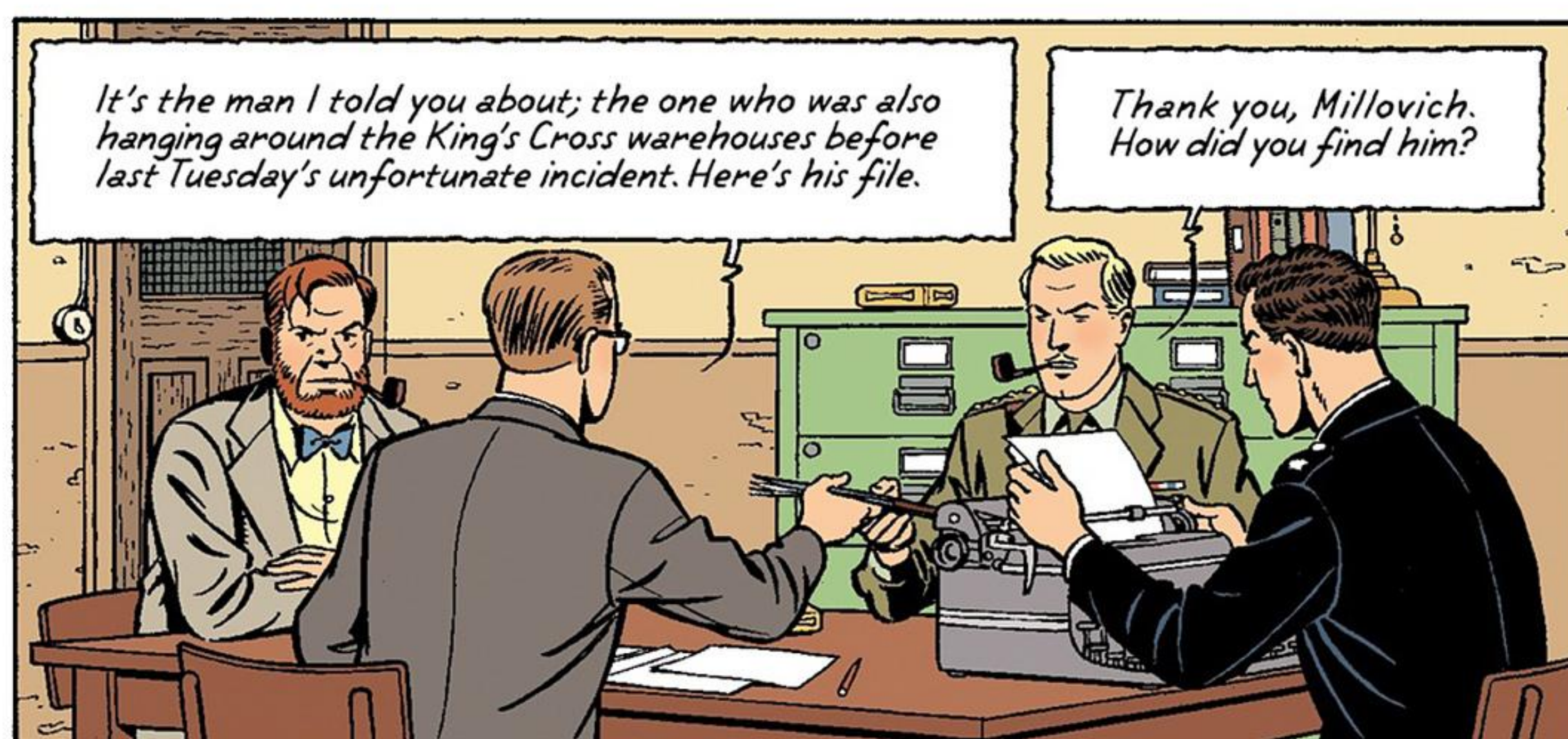
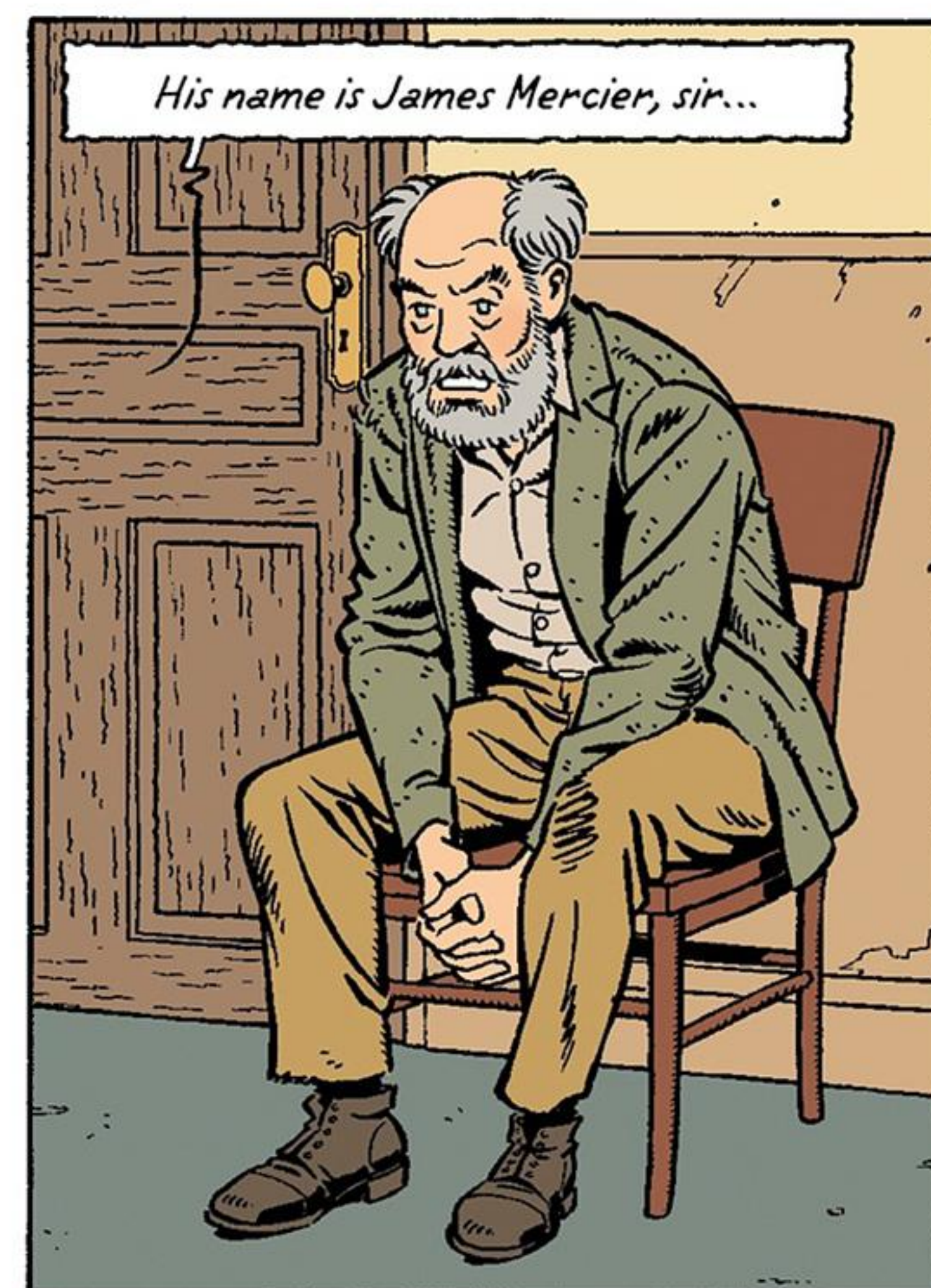
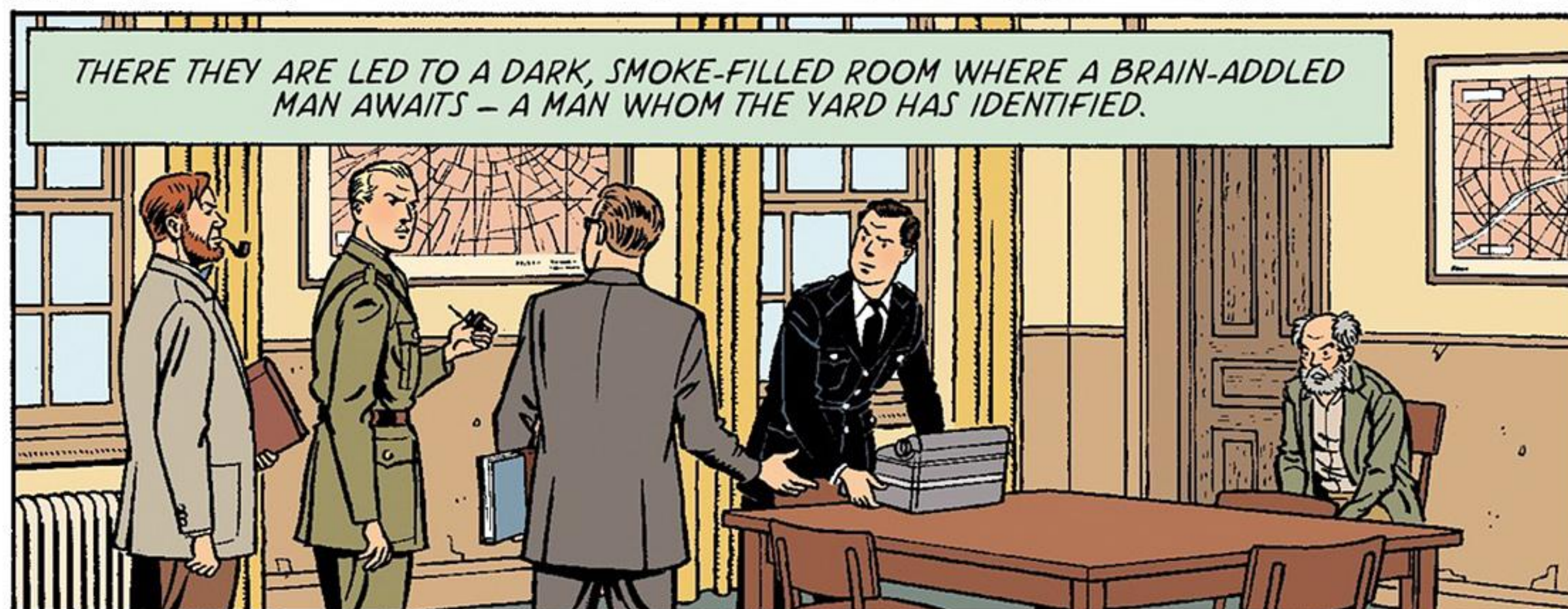
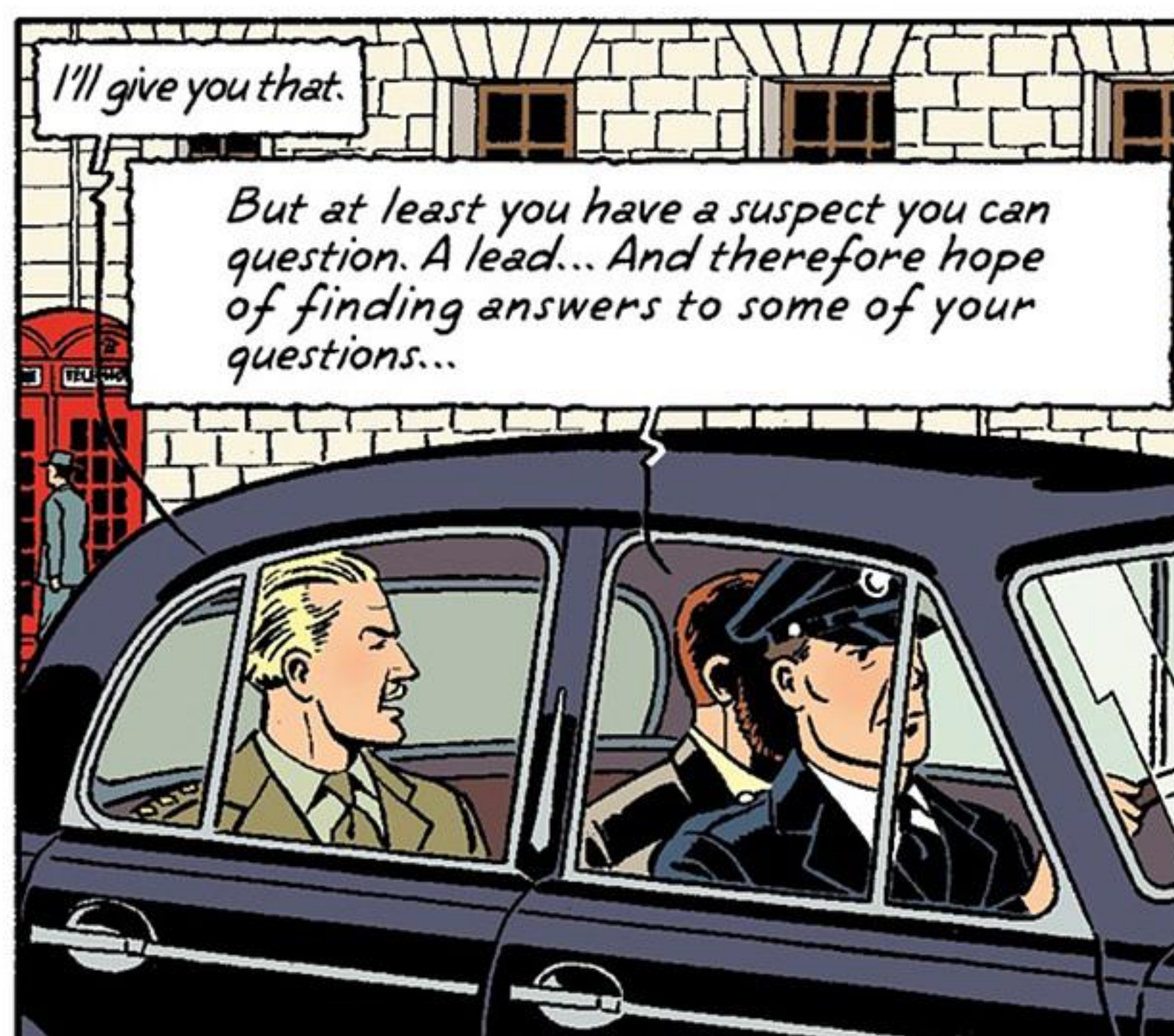


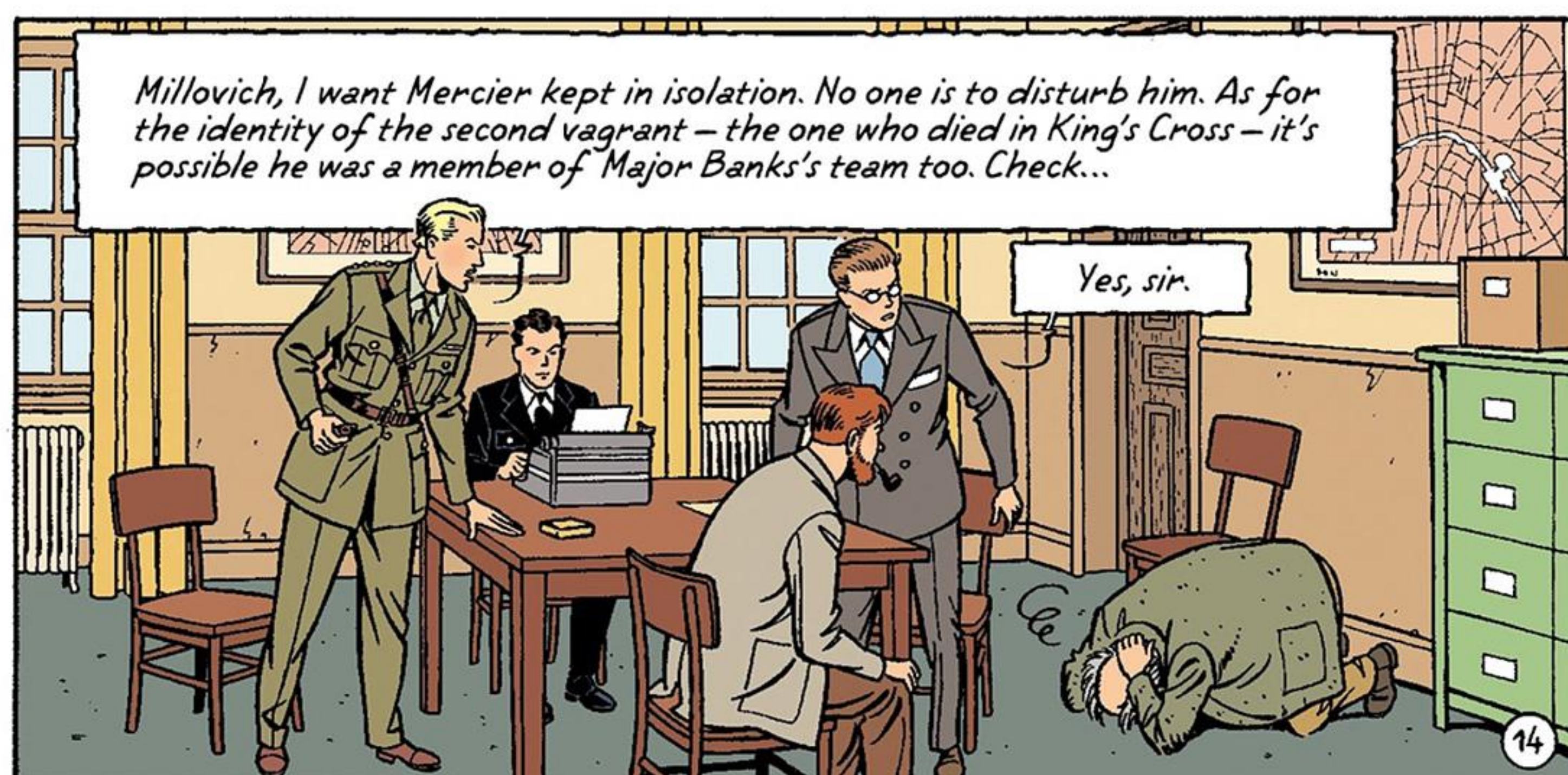
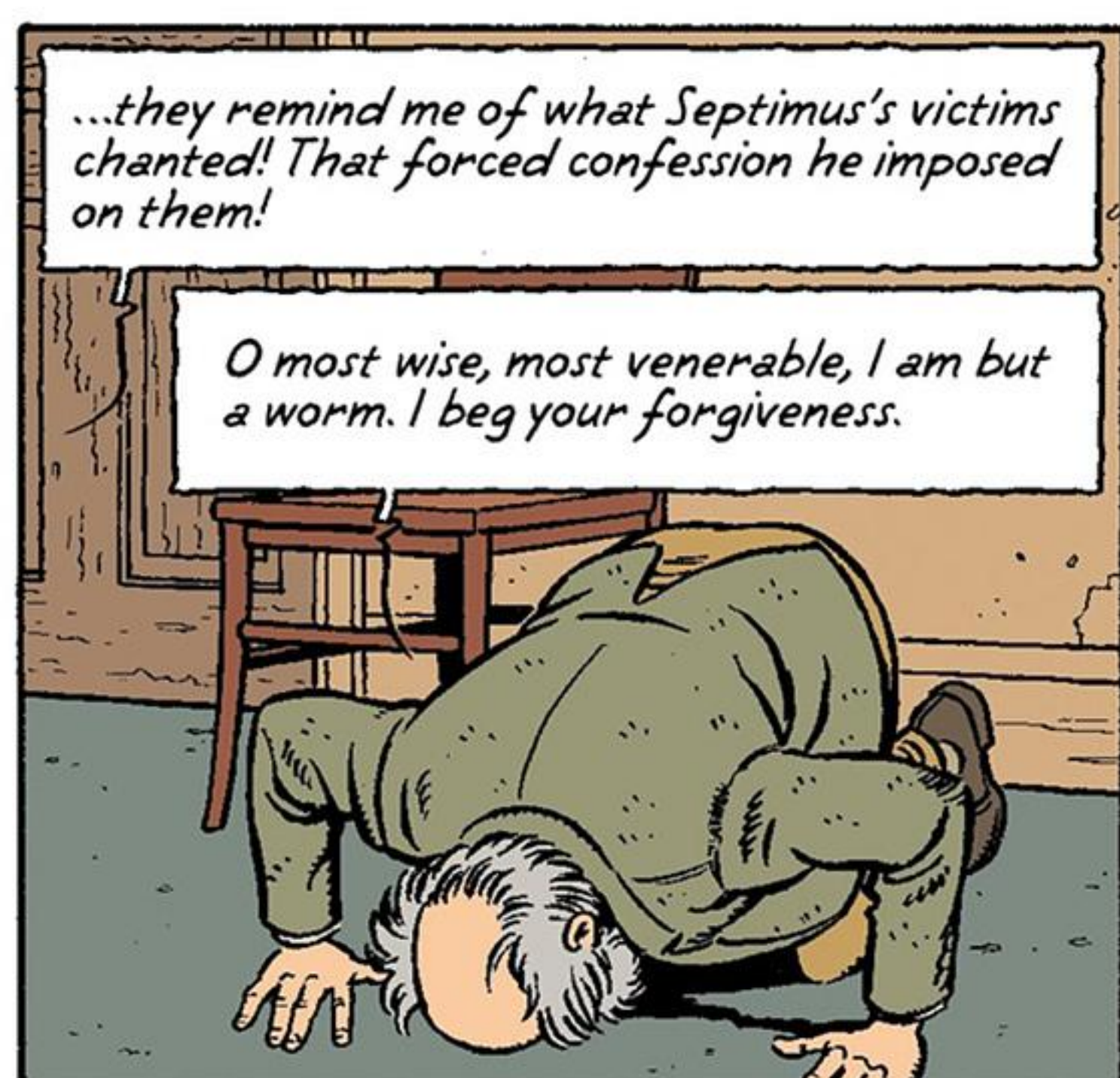
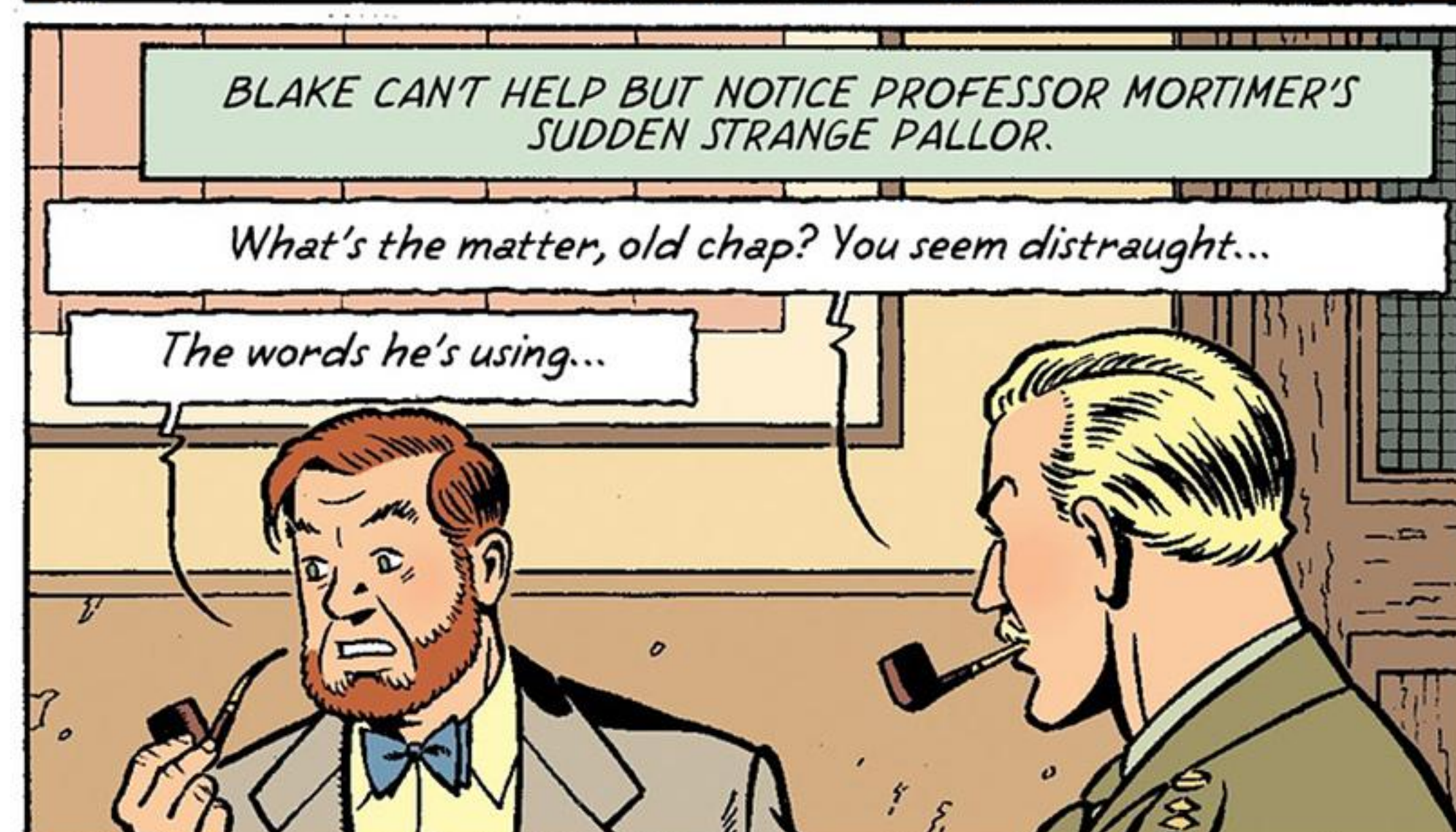
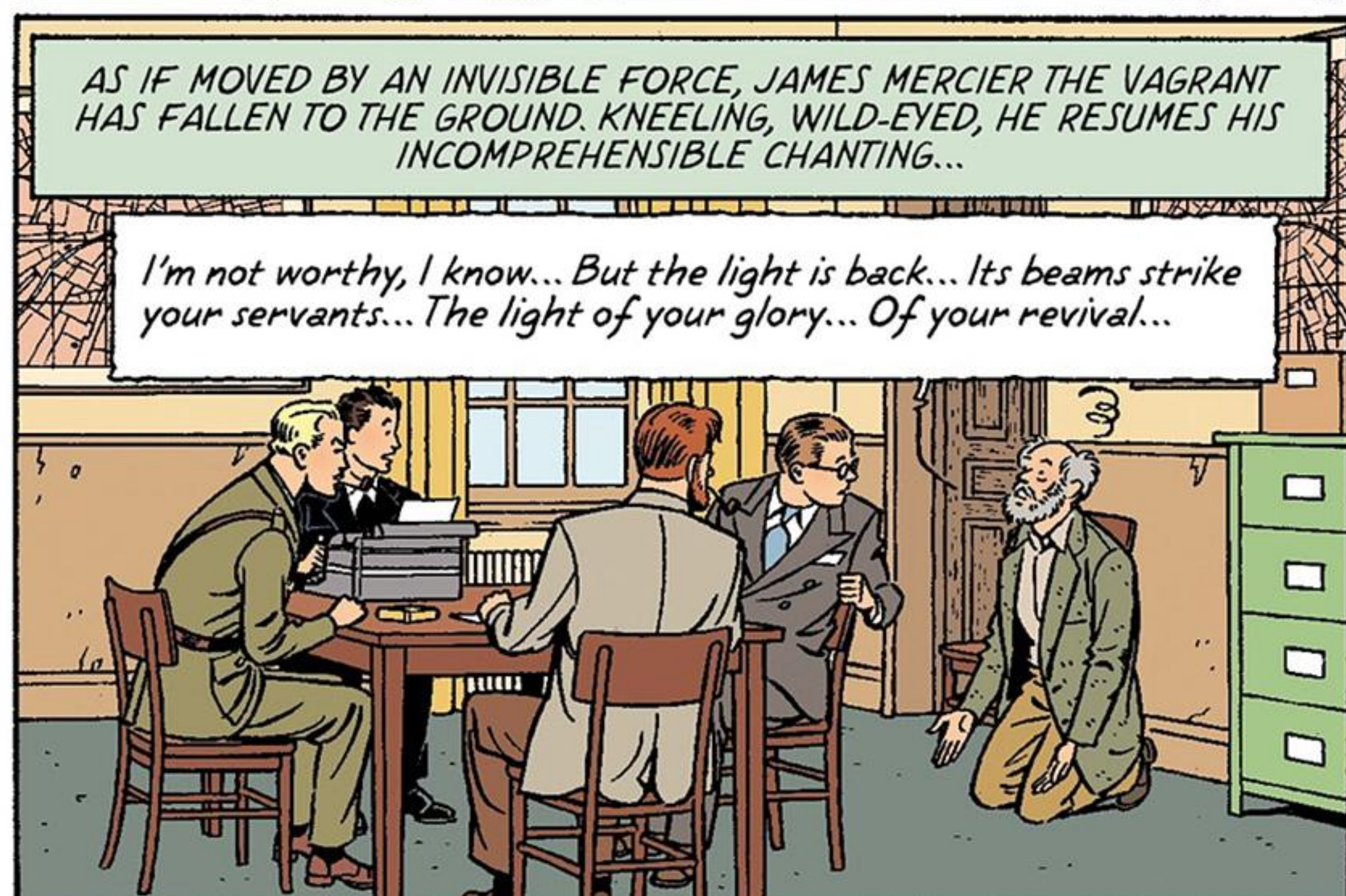
But as Septimus said himself, the main difficulty lies in isolating, capturing and measuring the Mega Wave. As of now it still escapes me and strikes where it wants... It seems... How can I put it?... To have a will of its own. And I must say it worries me.



Ah! My transport is here. You should come along... I have a peculiar case to show you. One that should interest you, since everything points to the suspect being insane...

*19TH-CENTURY FRENCH NEUROLOGIST, AND ONE OF THE WORLD'S PIONEERS IN NEUROLOGY.





IT'S ENOUGH FOR A FIRST INTERVIEW WITH MERCIER. LEAVING THE YARD, BLAKE, HOPING TO DISTRACT MORTIMER FROM HIS WORK, PROPOSES THEY COLLABORATE ON THE INVESTIGATION...



I think a visit to Bedlam Hospice is in order. I could use your help...

Why not?... I need a change of pace...

THE TWO MEN DECIDE TO WALK TOGETHER A WHILE. THE WEATHER IS FINE, AND THE BALMY TEMPERATURE FINALLY ALLOWS LONDONERS TO LEAVE CLOAKS AND SCARVES AT HOME. THE WHOLE CITY TAKES ON A MORE LEISURELY PACE...

I'm sorry I can't offer you a better distraction.

It'll be nice to see Banks again. I don't know what shape he's in these days.

We never have enough time. Friends go by and we don't keep an eye on them. You're an exception, Philip.

And I assure you I am suitably honoured, Francis...

BUT THE CALM IS SHATTERED SUDDENLY WHEN A DRIVER, HAVING APPARENTLY LOST CONTROL OF HIS VEHICLE, ENTERS THE STREET THE WRONG WAY...



...SOWING PANIC IN HIS WAKE.

ANOTHER DRIVER MANAGES TO SWERVE ASIDE AT THE LAST SECOND AS THE VEHICLE SPEEDS UP AND ZOOMS TOWARDS BLAKE AND MORTIMER.

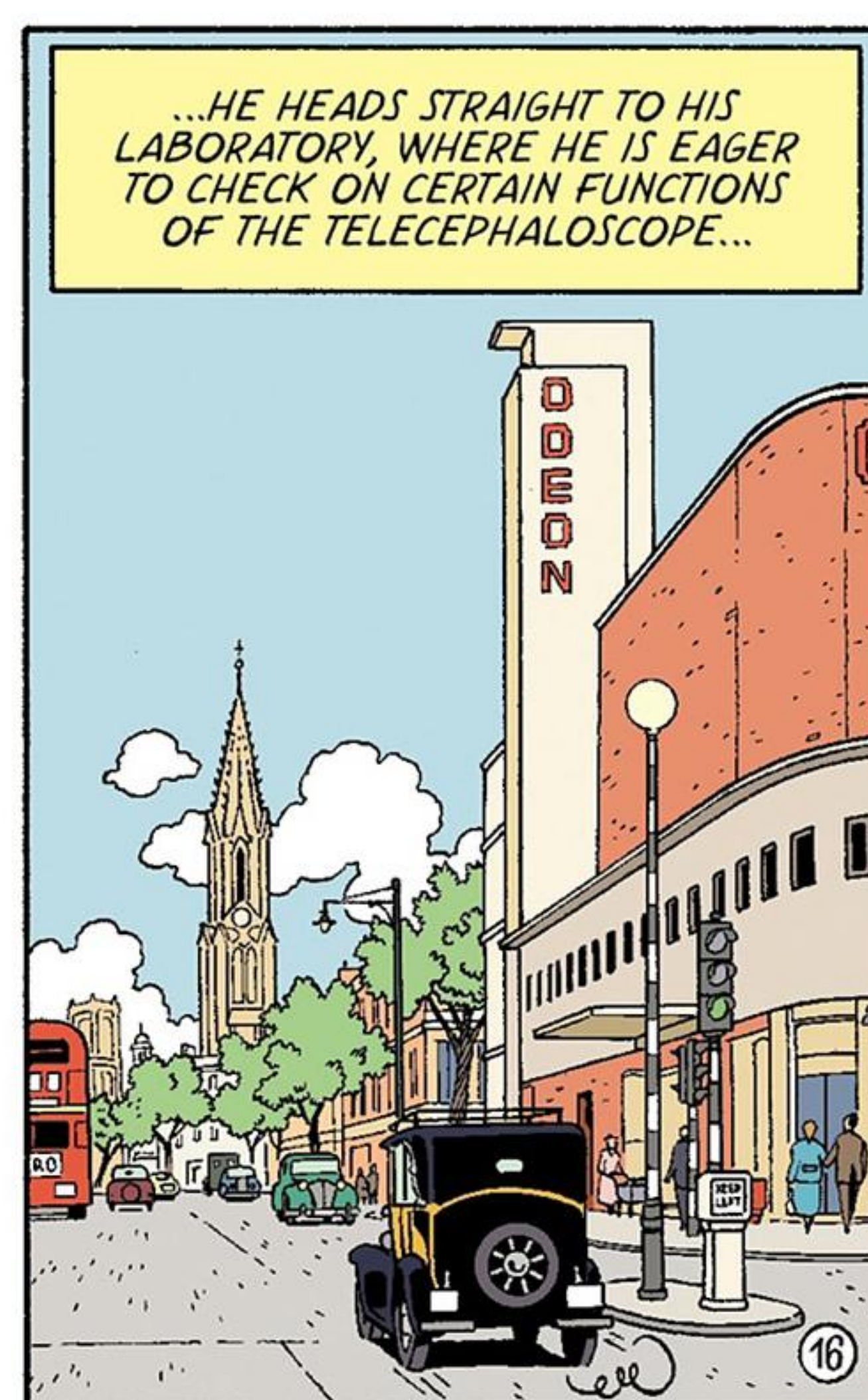
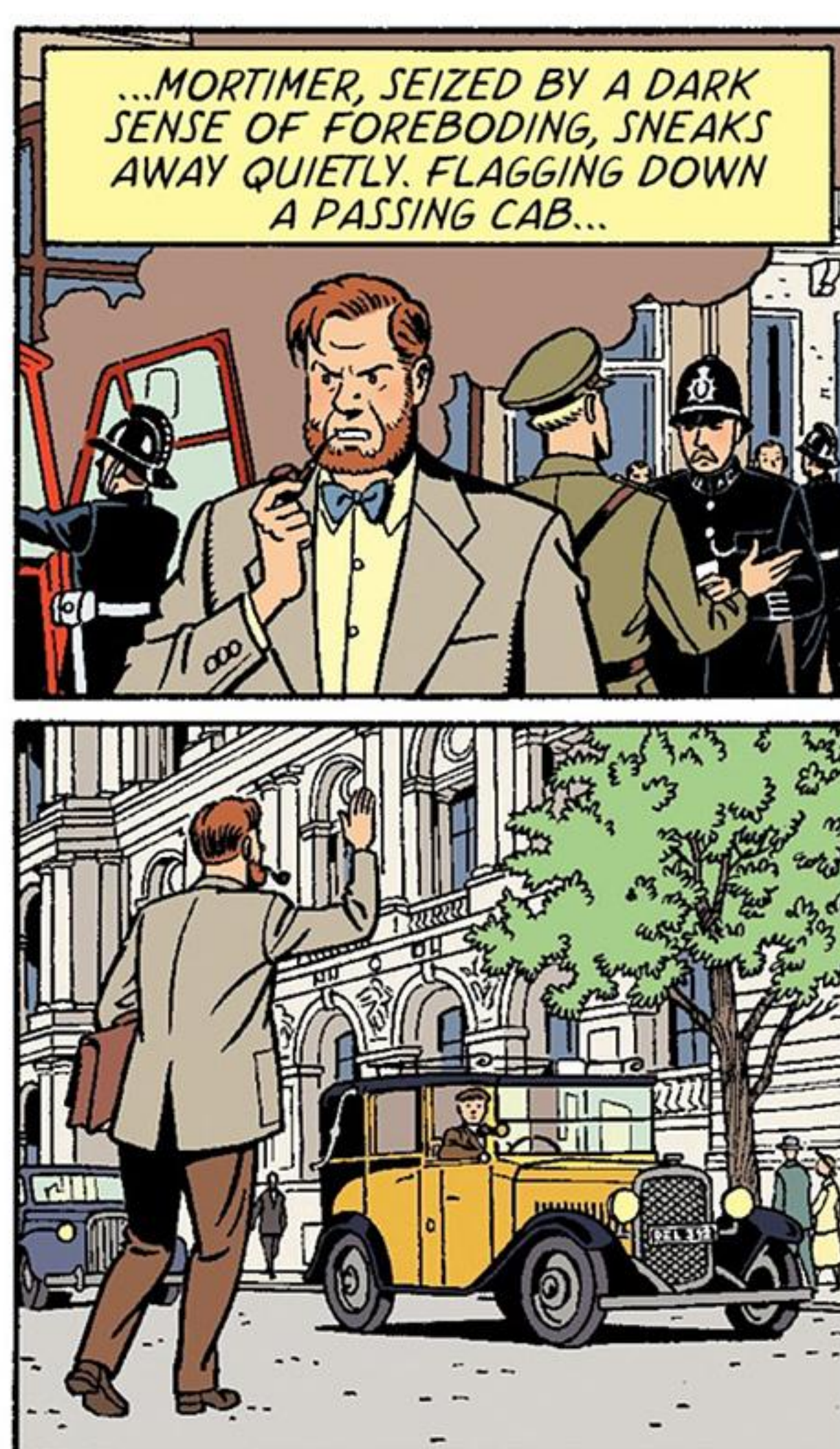
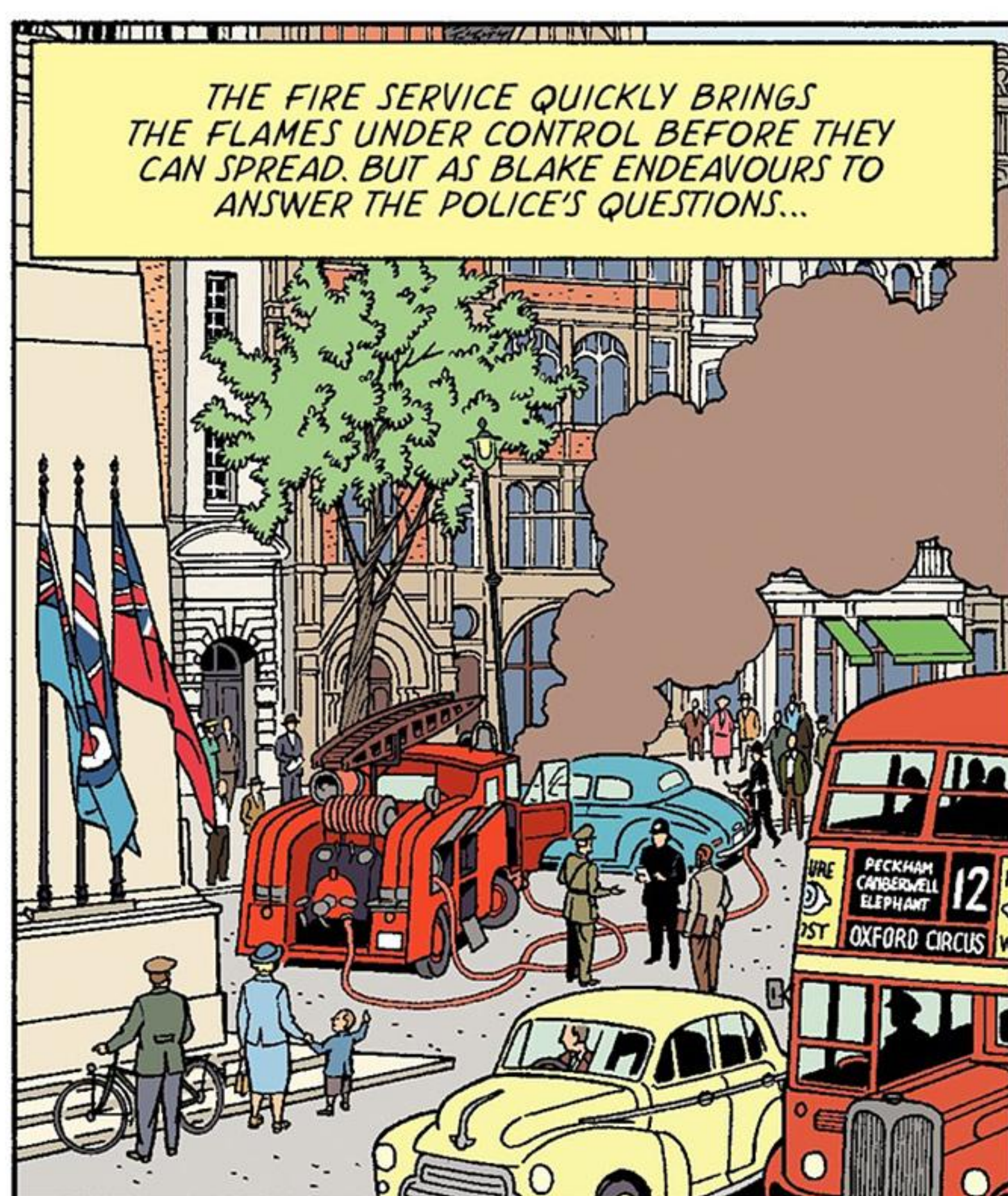
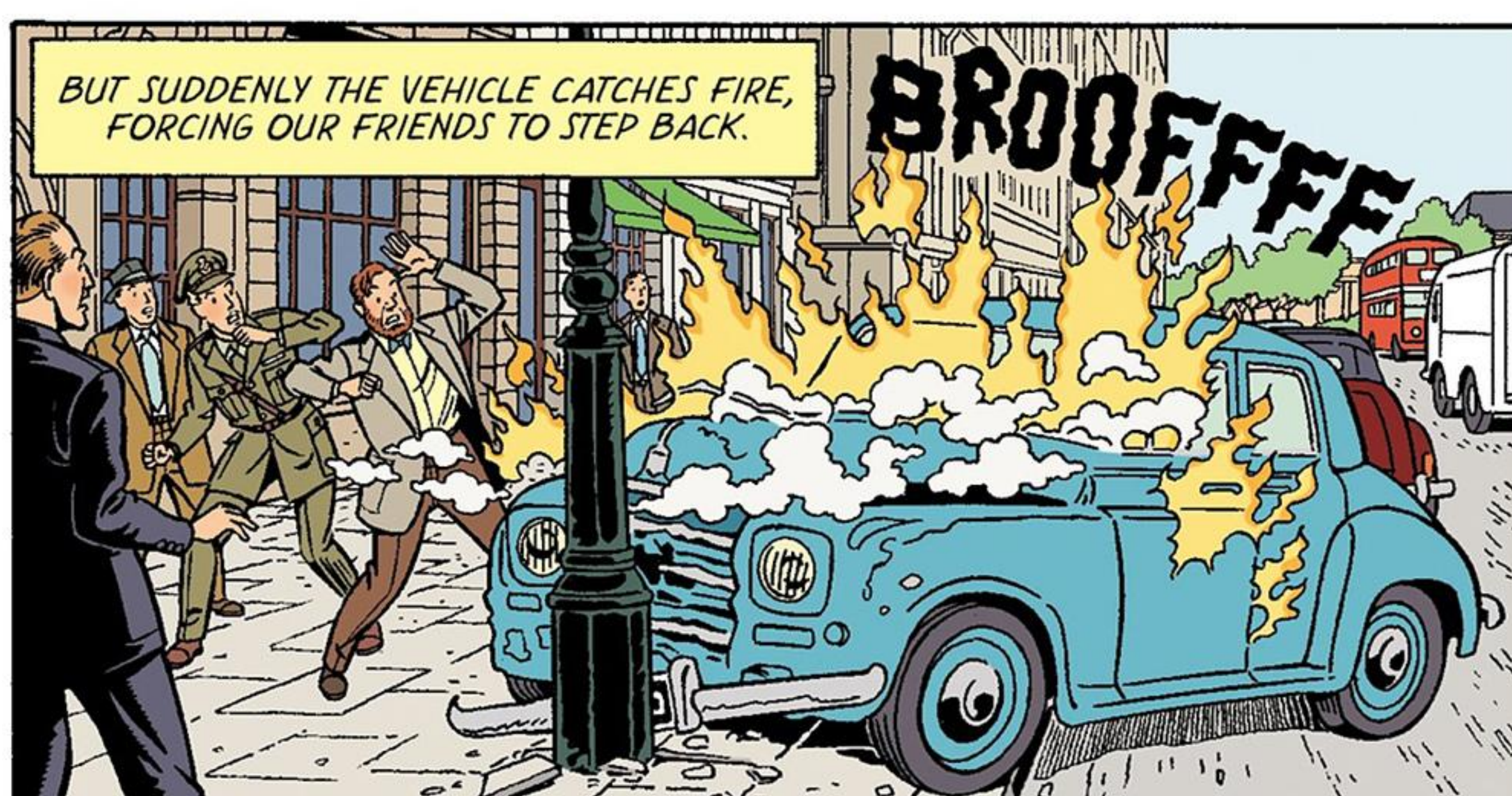
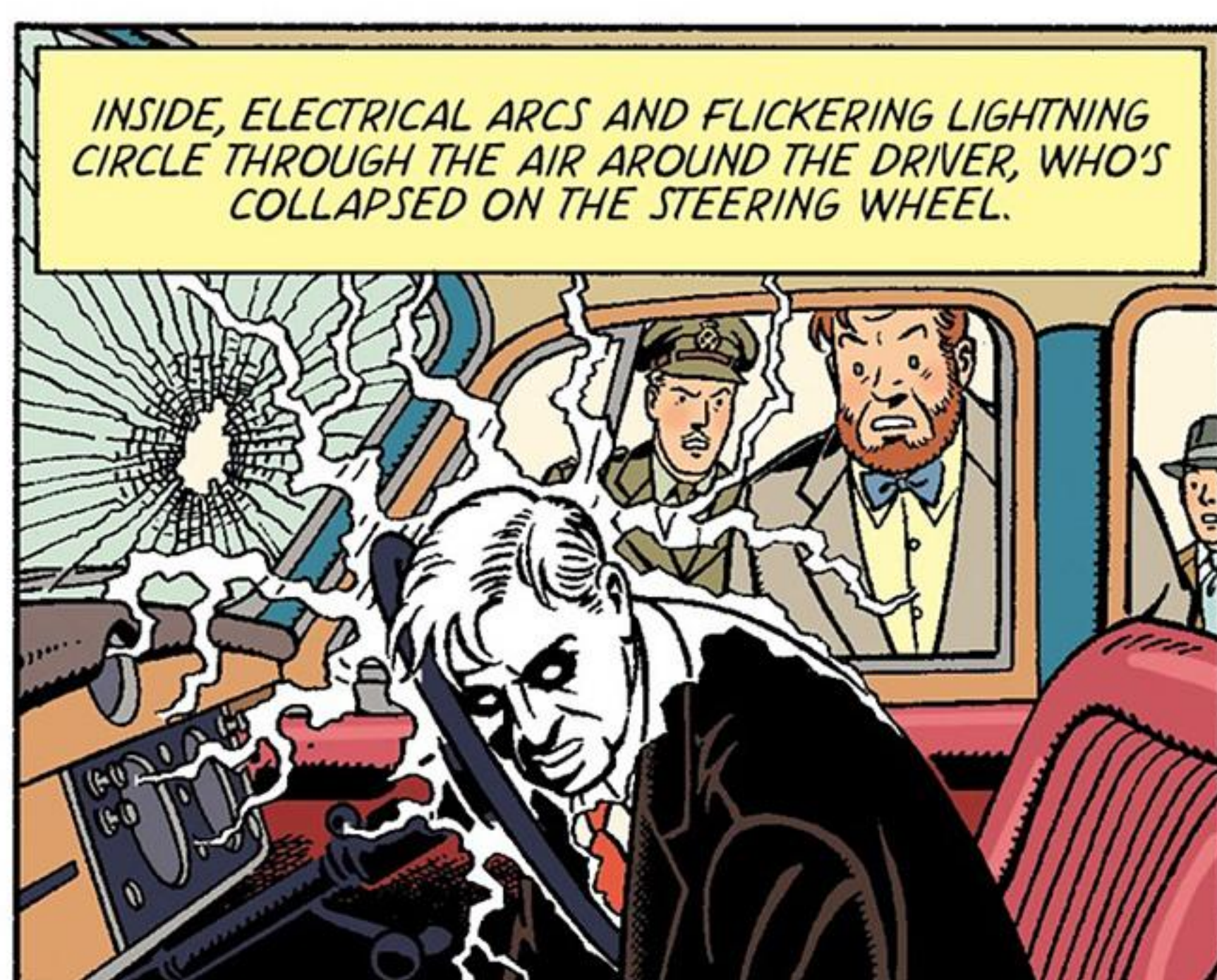
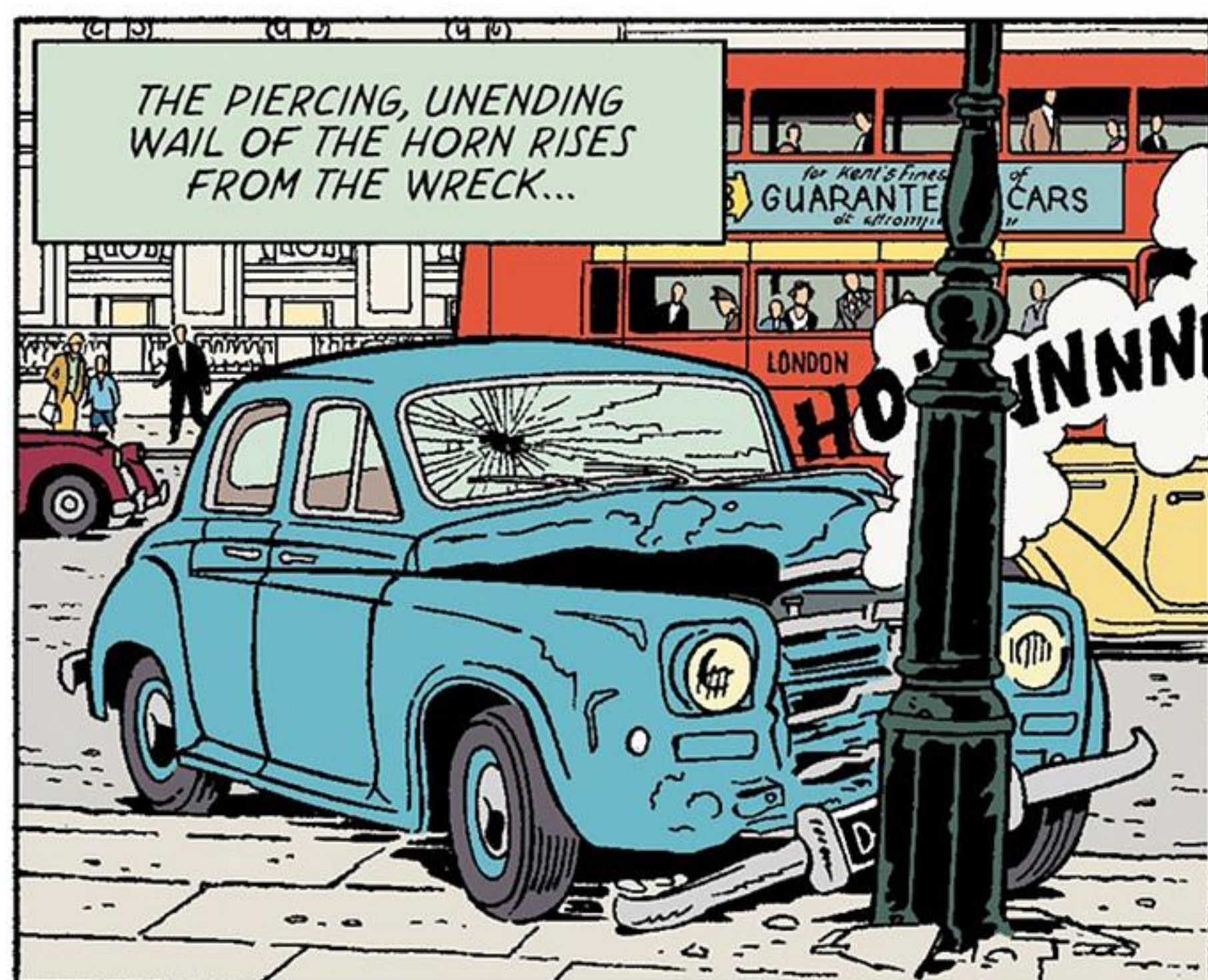
HONNNK

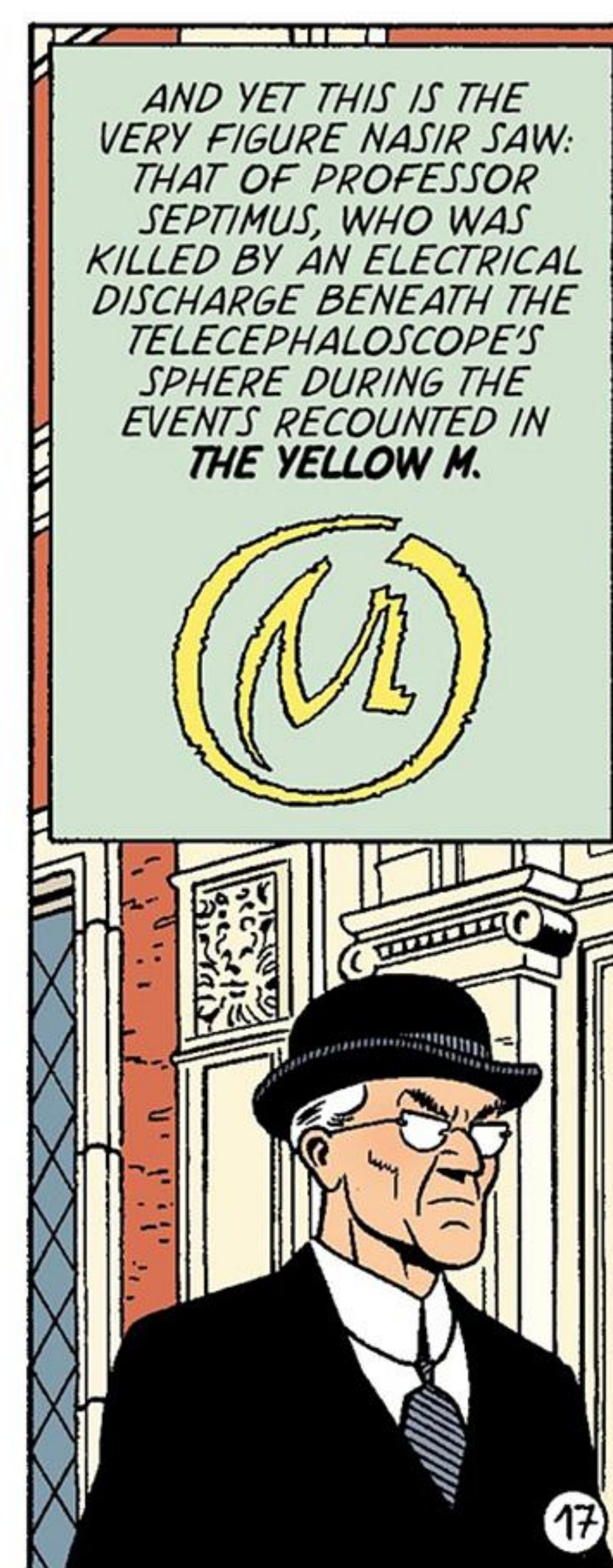
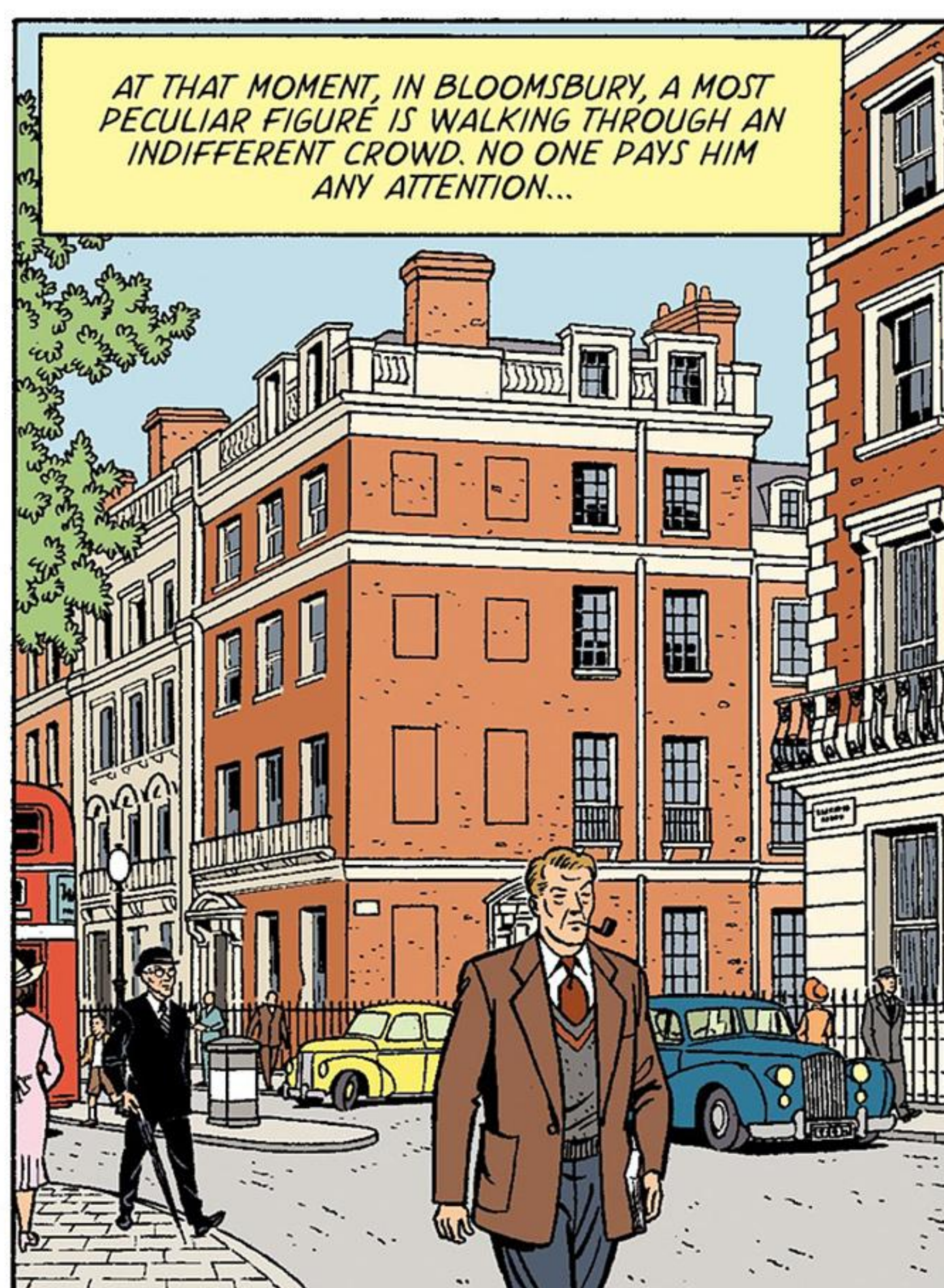
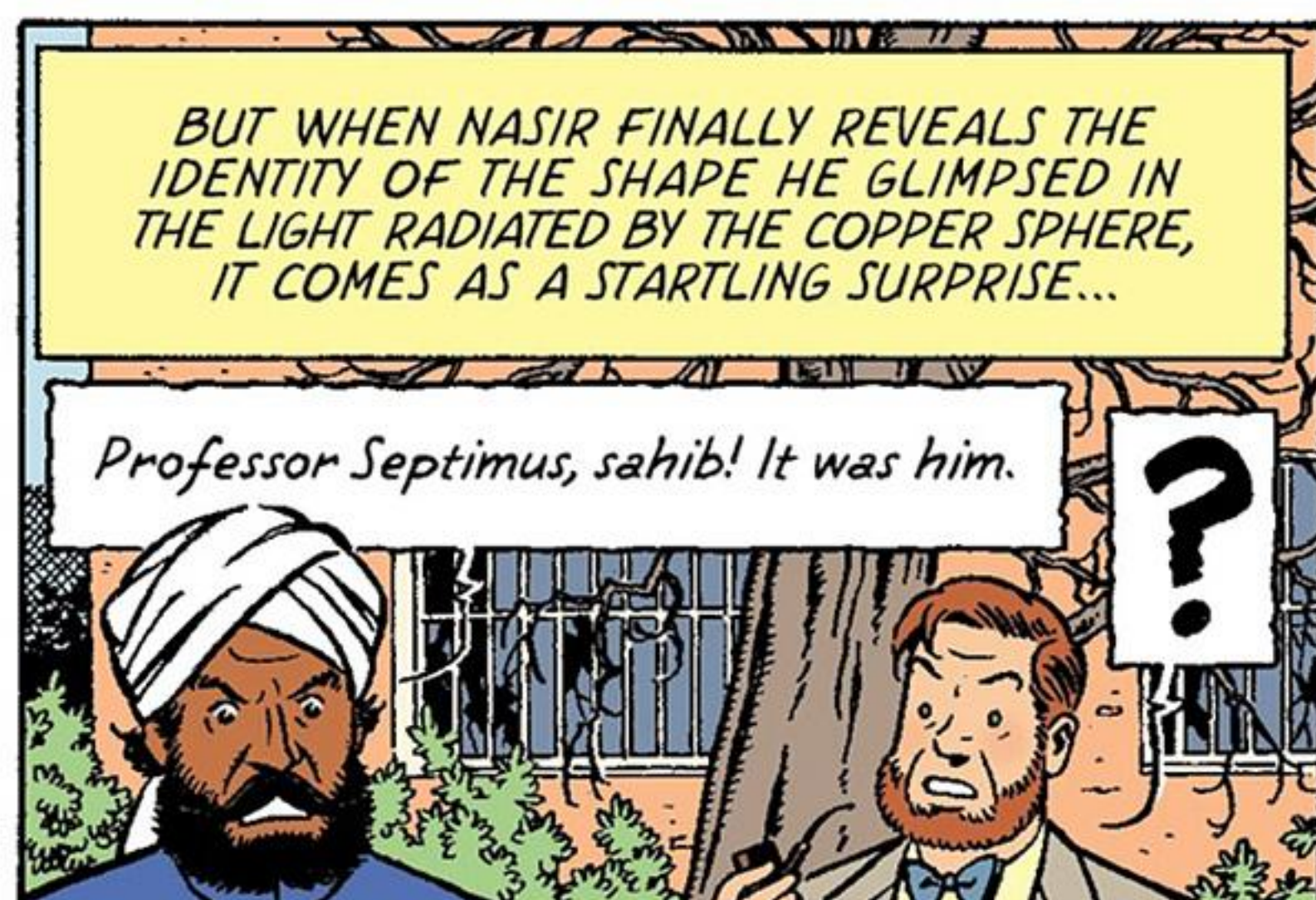
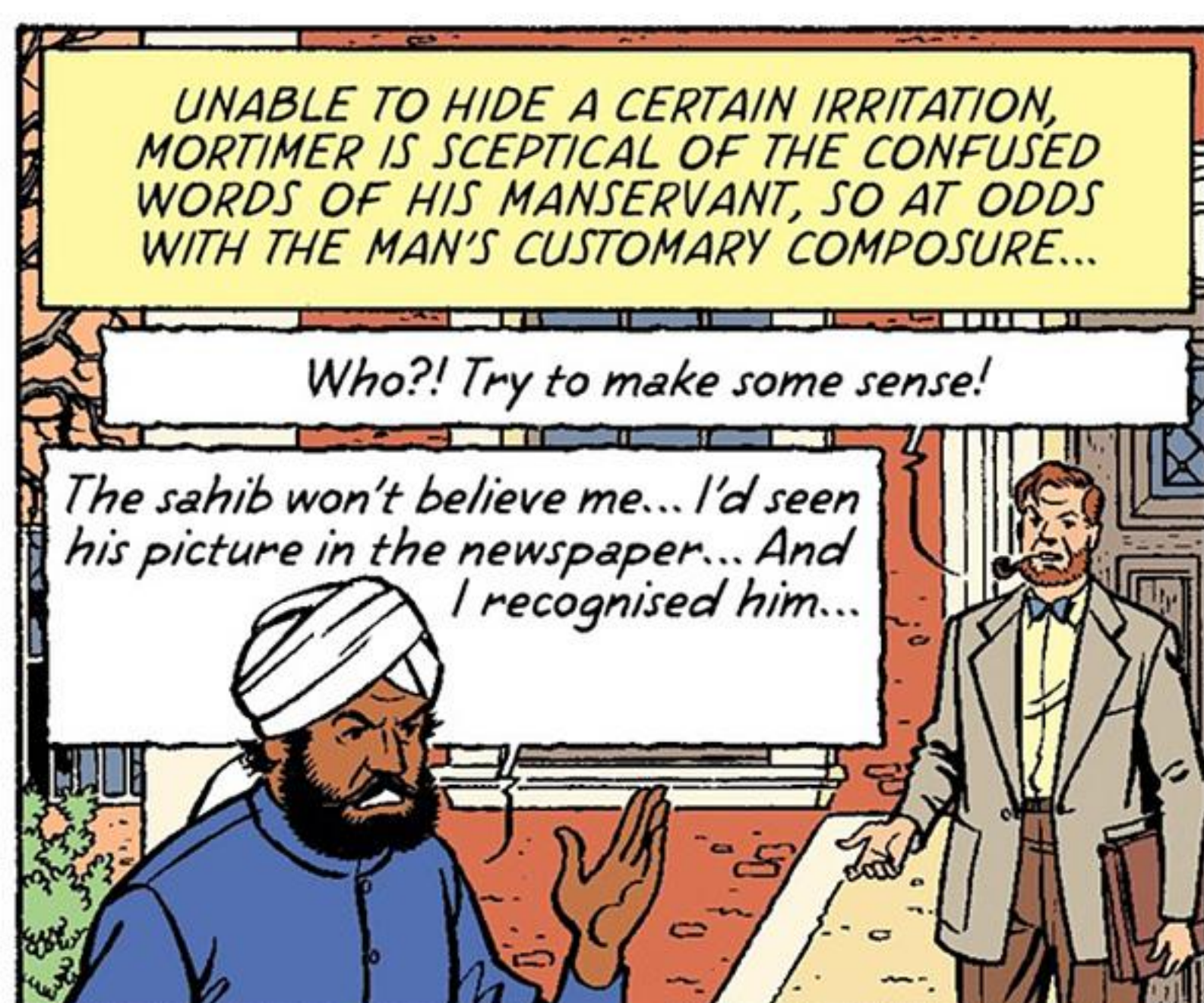
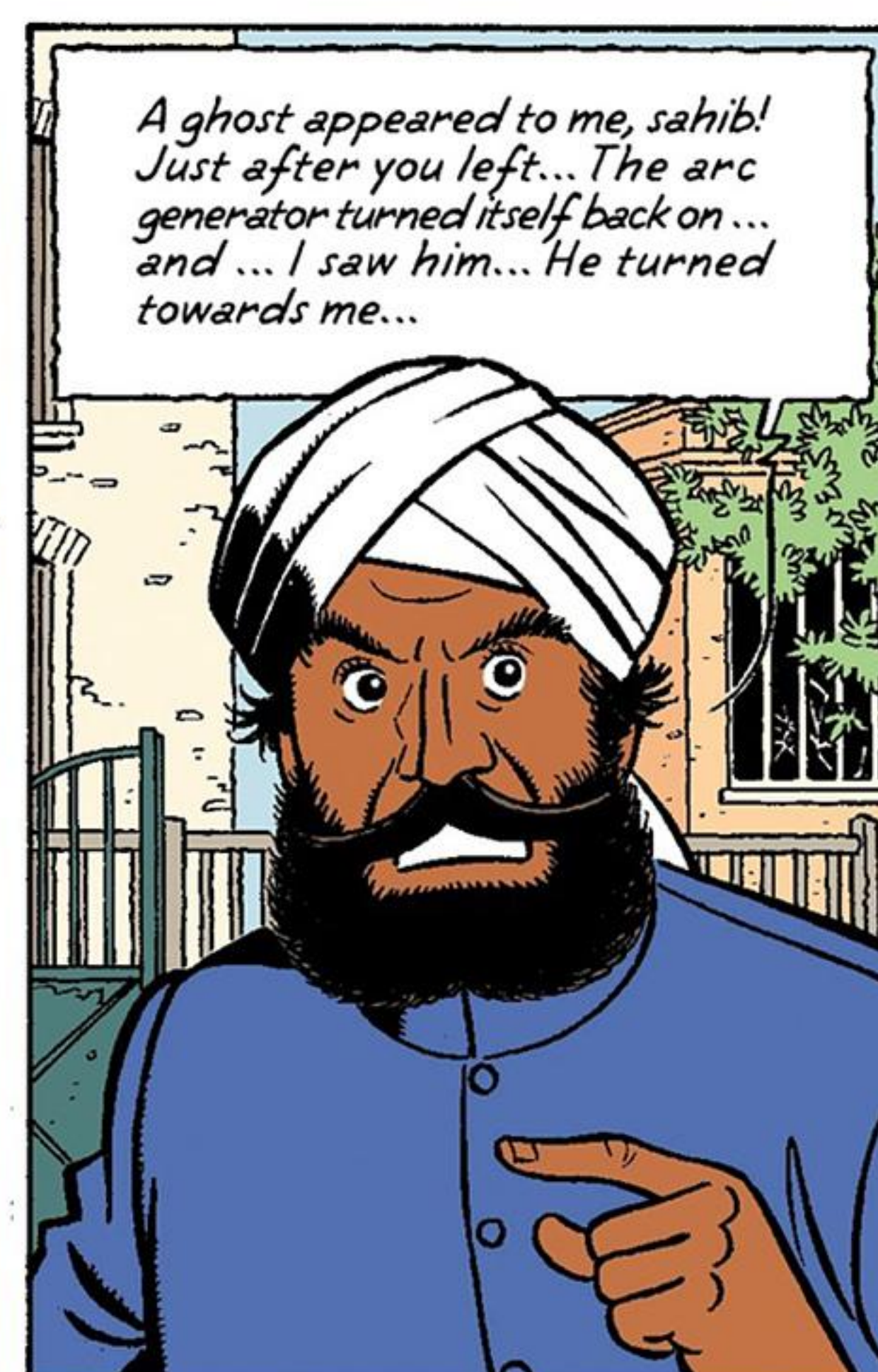
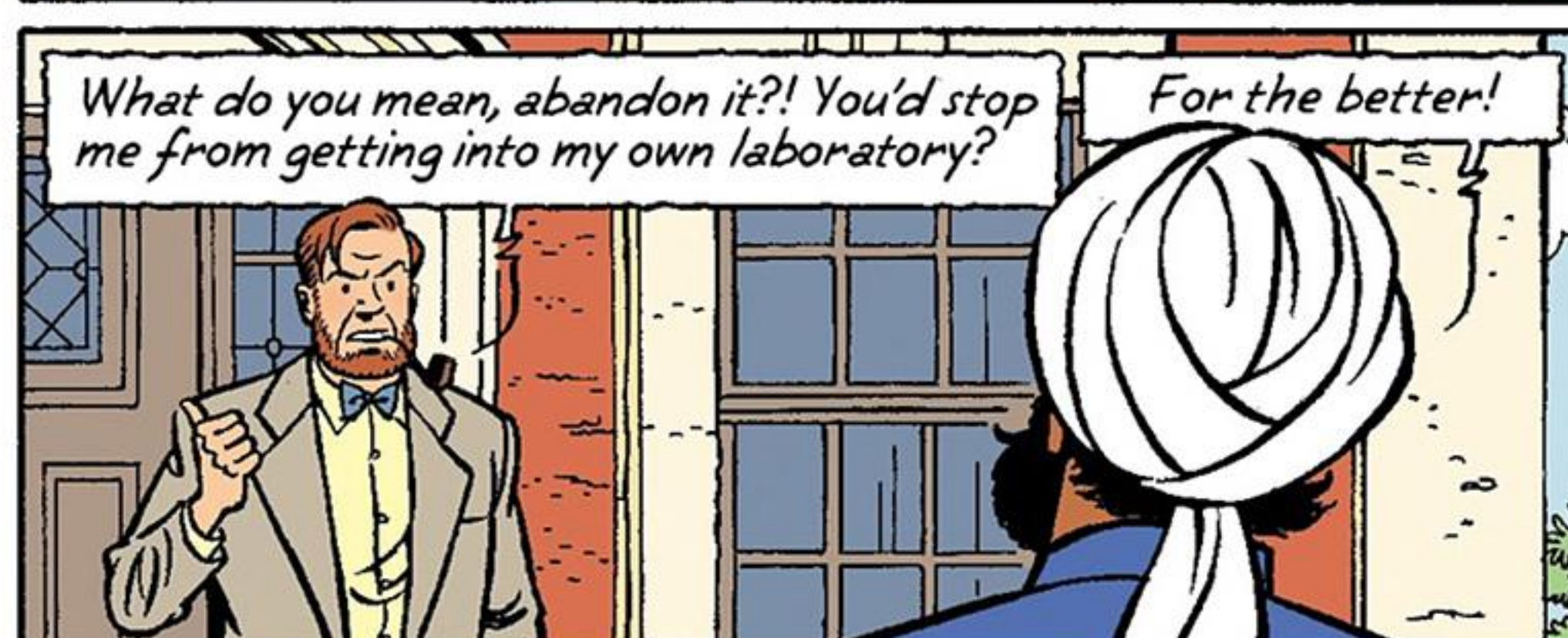
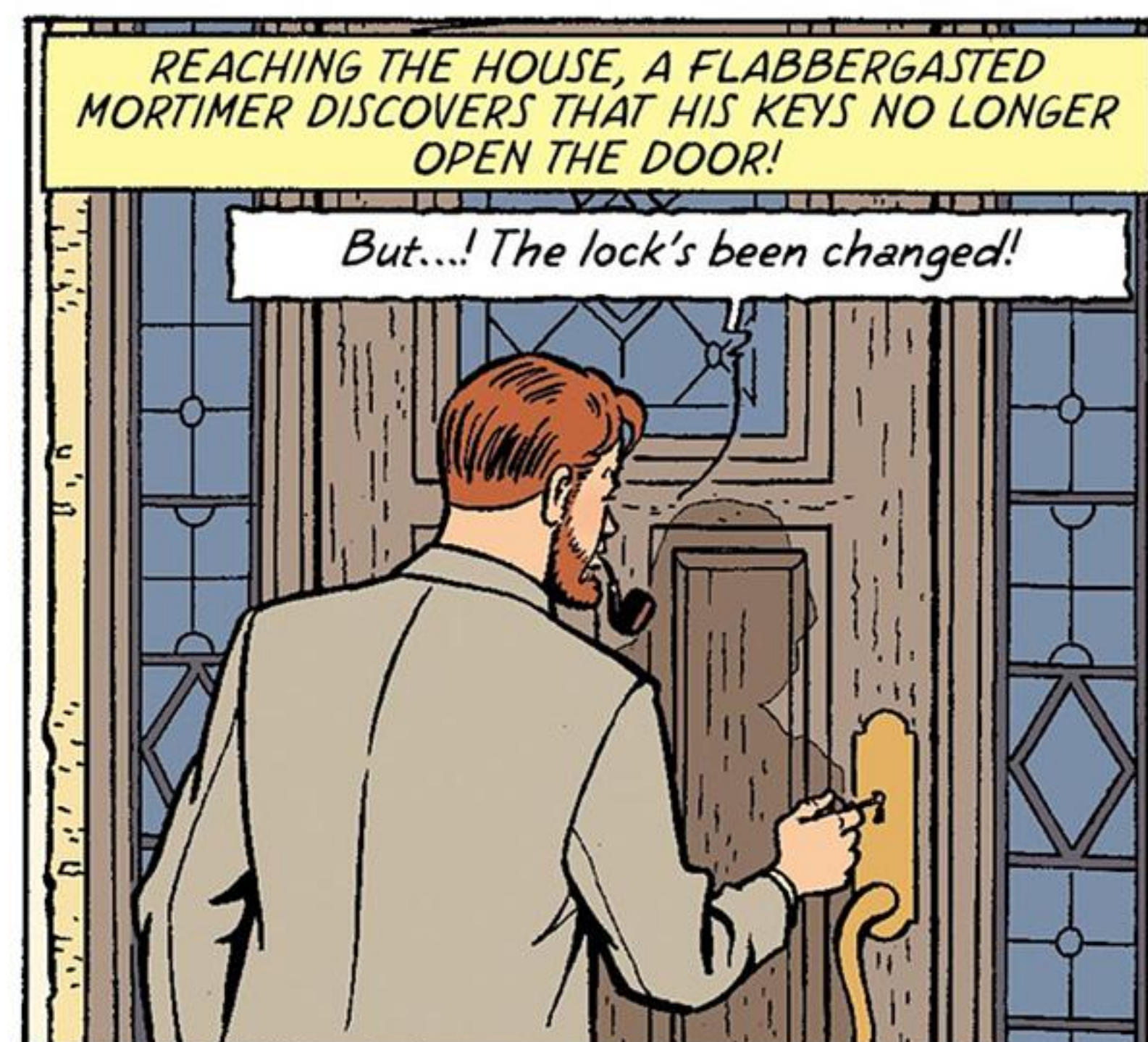
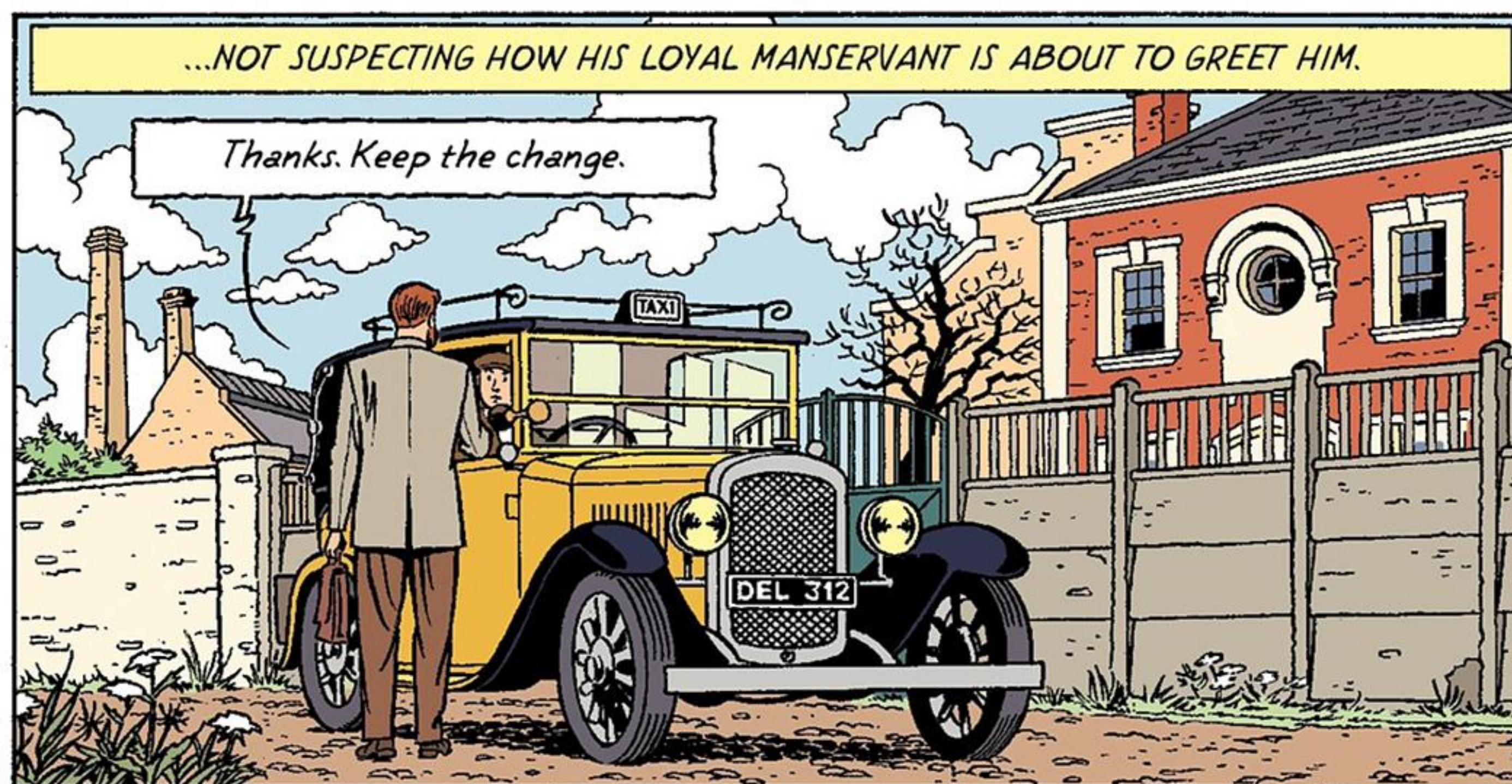
A RUSH THAT ENDS BRUTALLY AGAINST A LAMP POST.

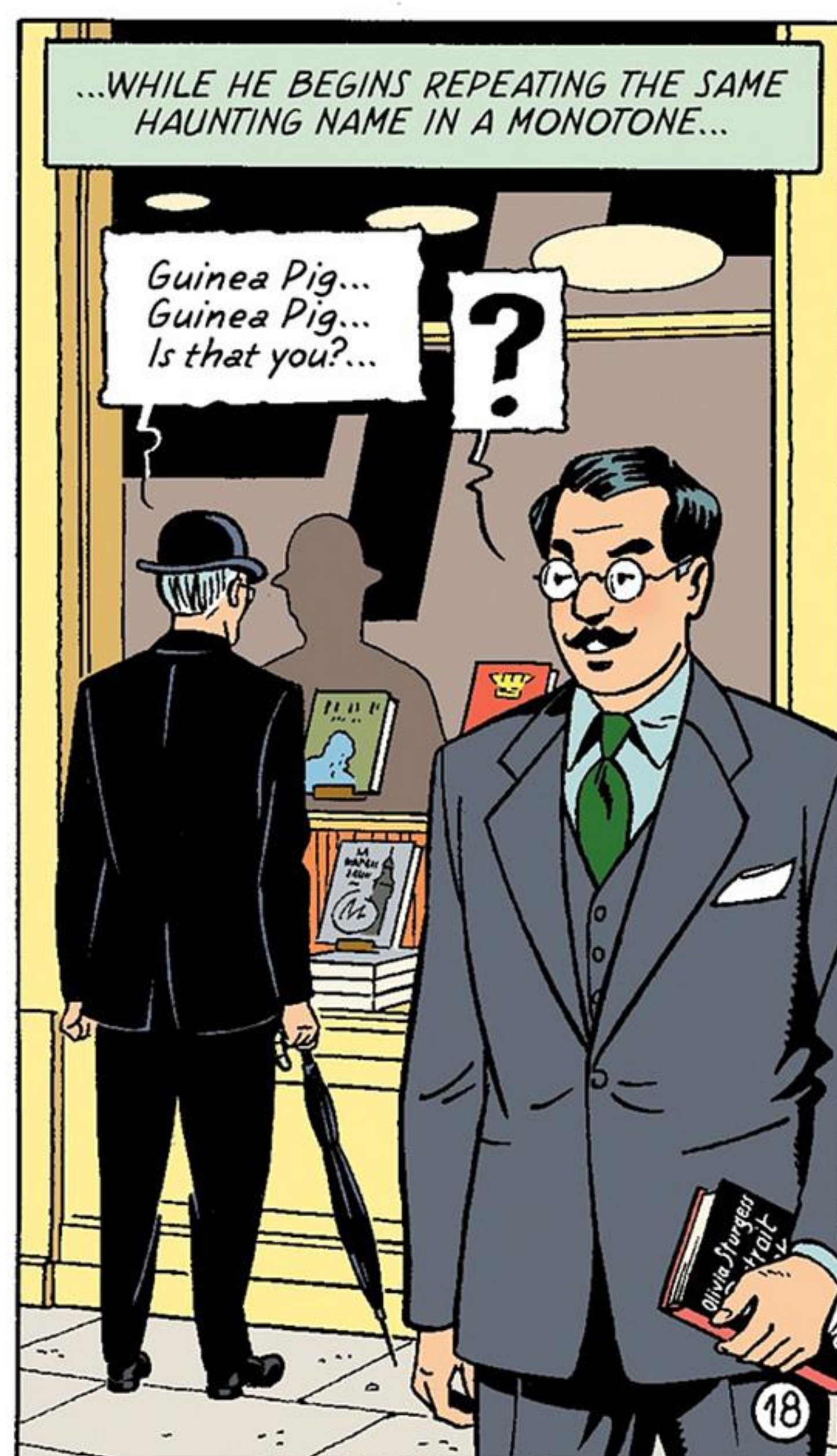
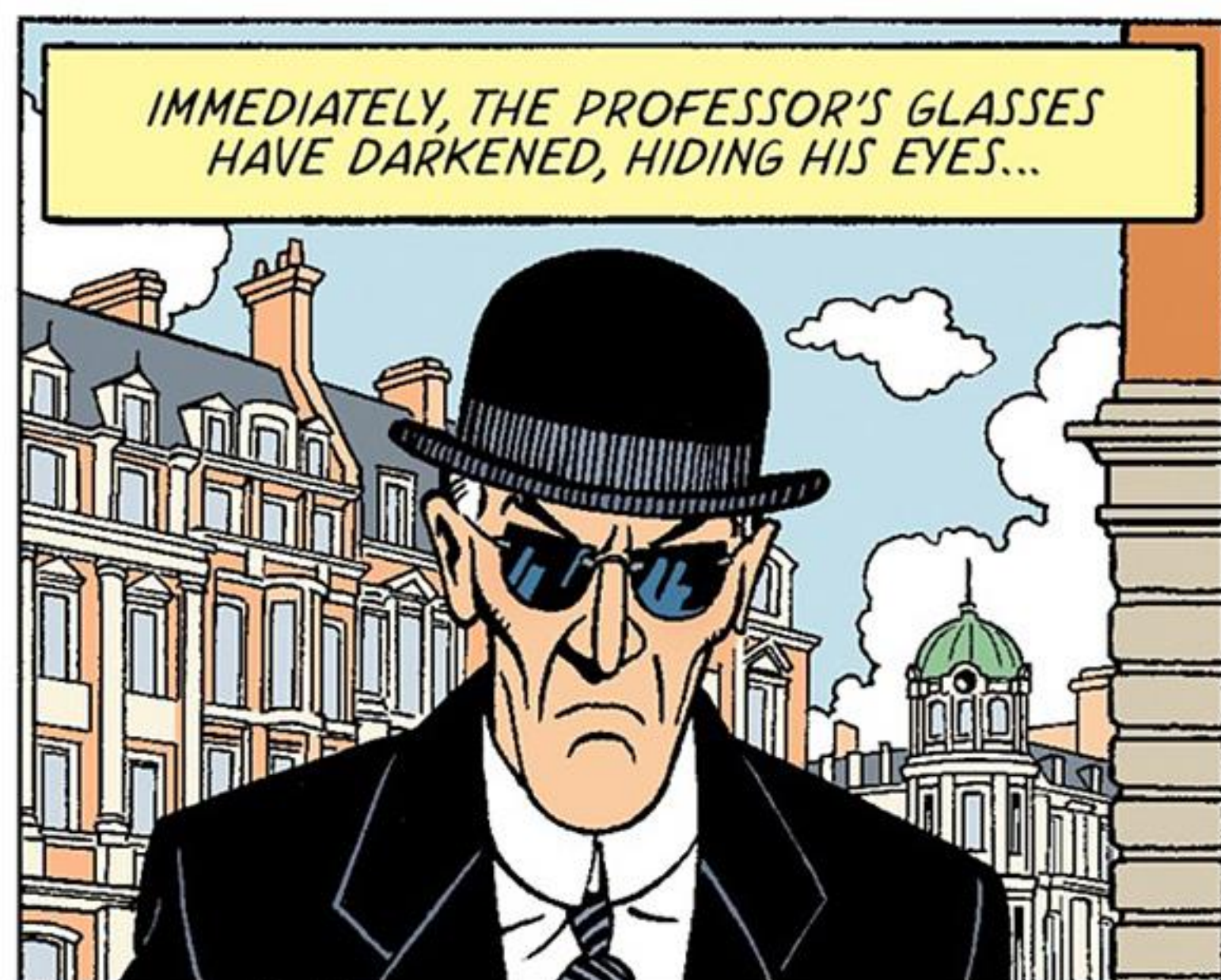
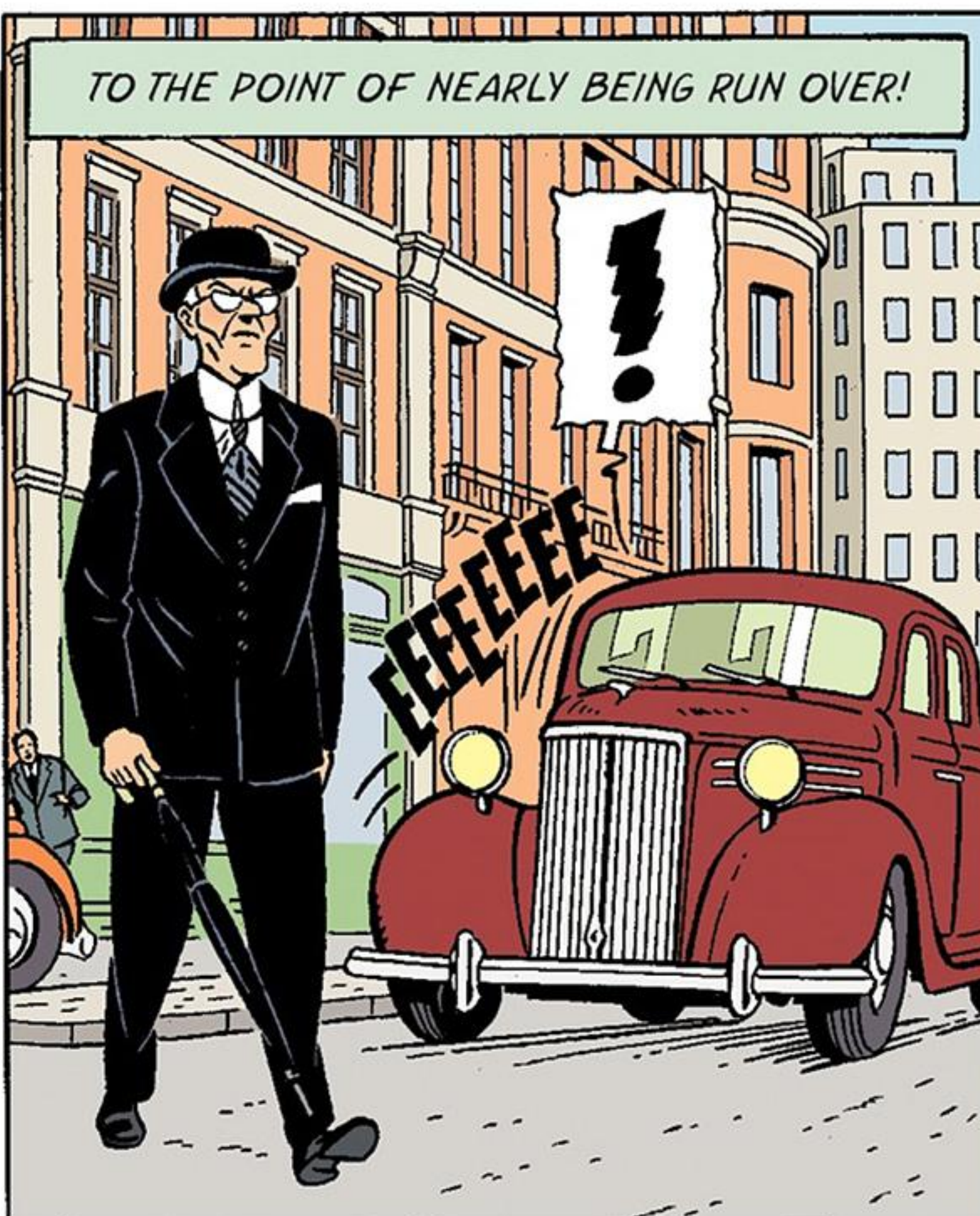
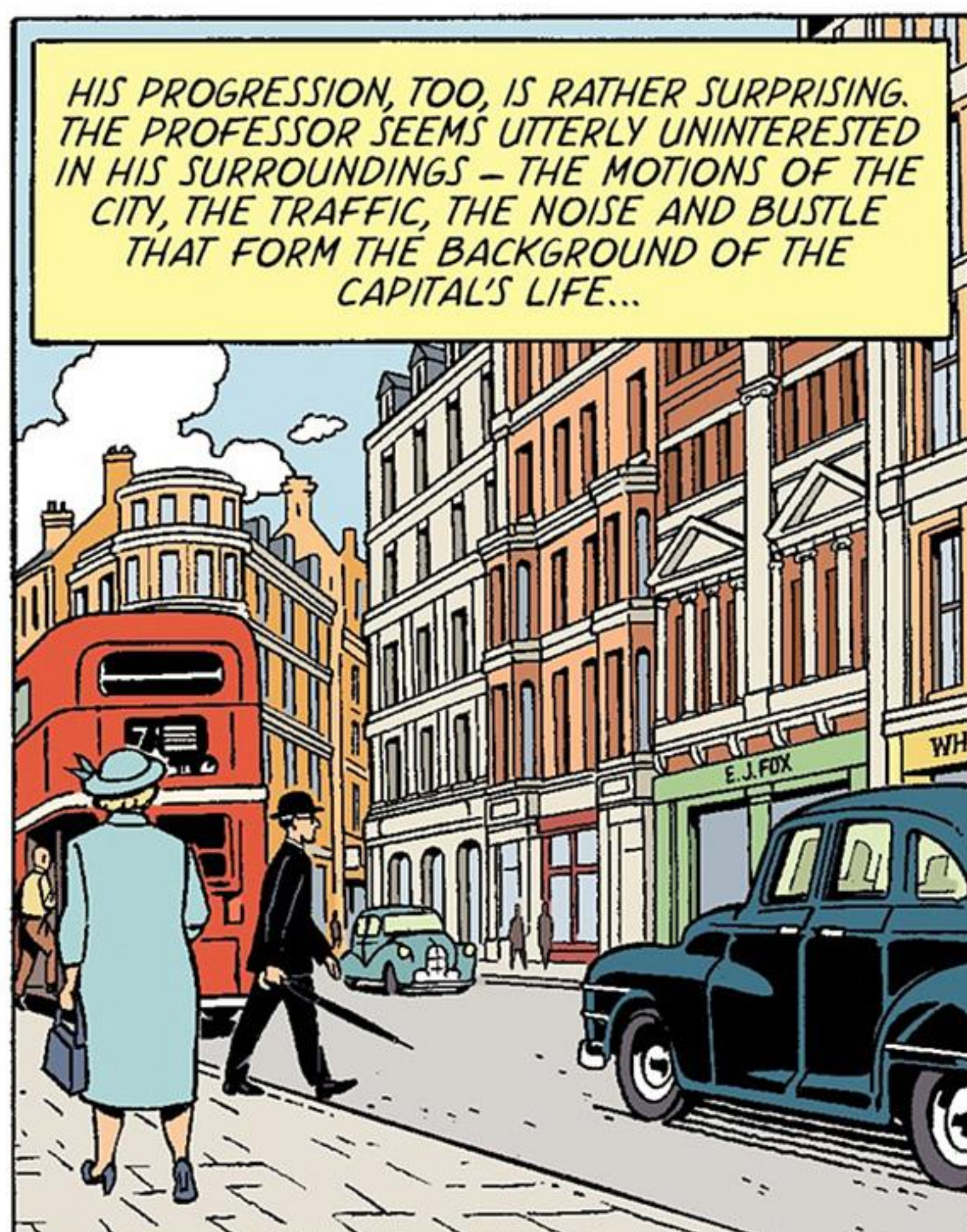
ONLY MORTIMER'S QUICK REFLEXES PREVENT A DISASTER! ALL STEERING LOST, THE CAR ALMOST KNOCKS BLAKE DOWN IN ITS FATEFUL RUSH...

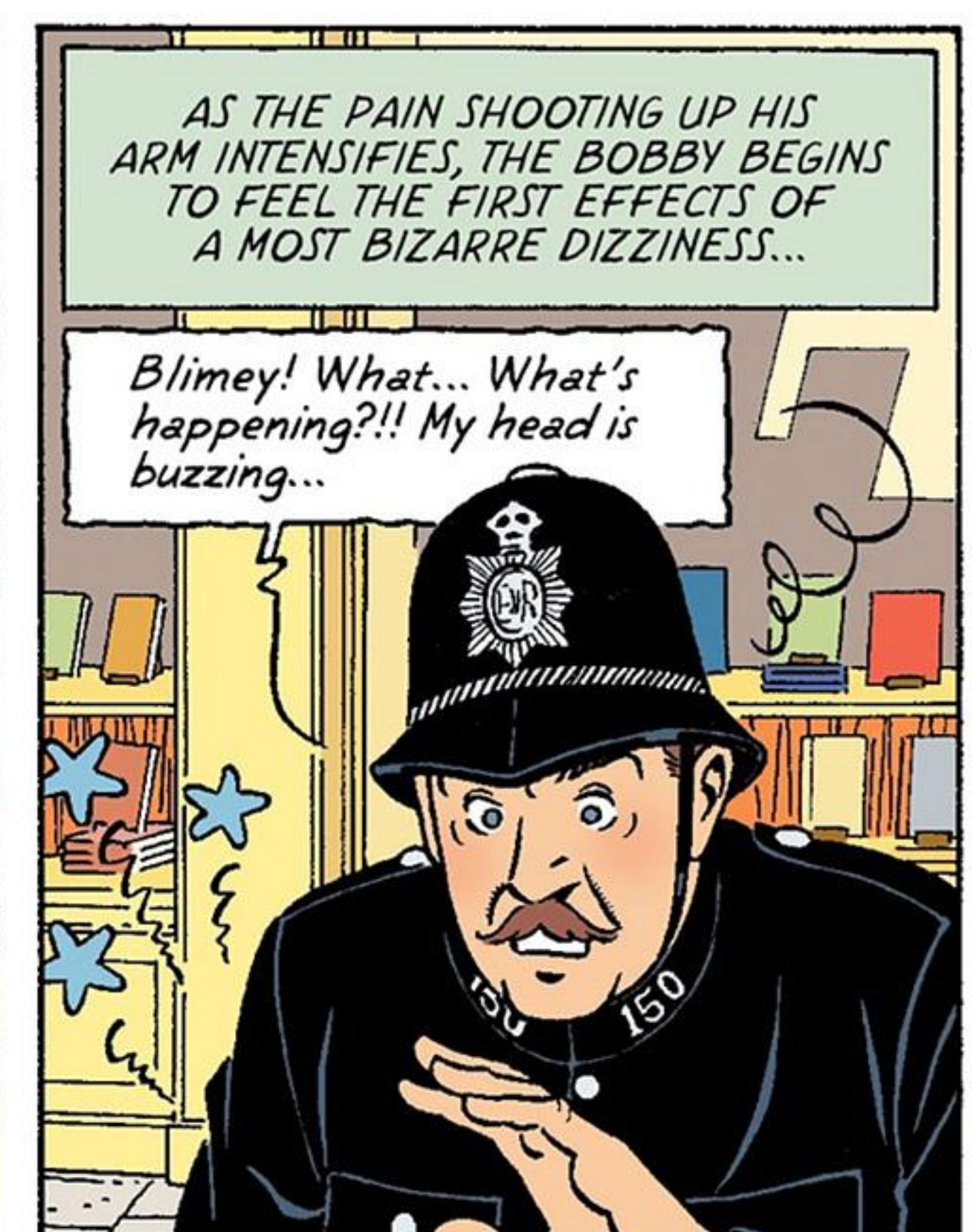
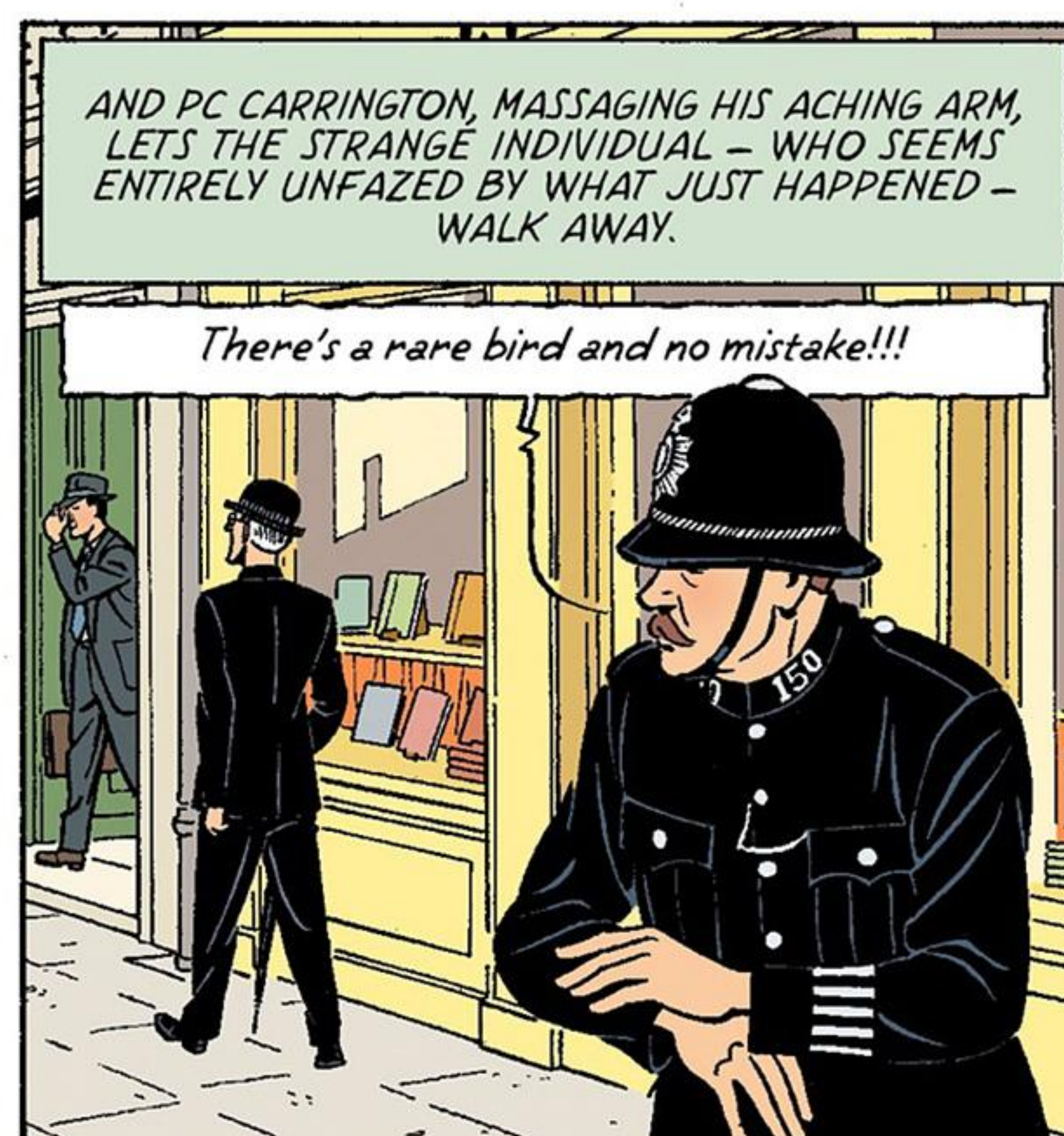
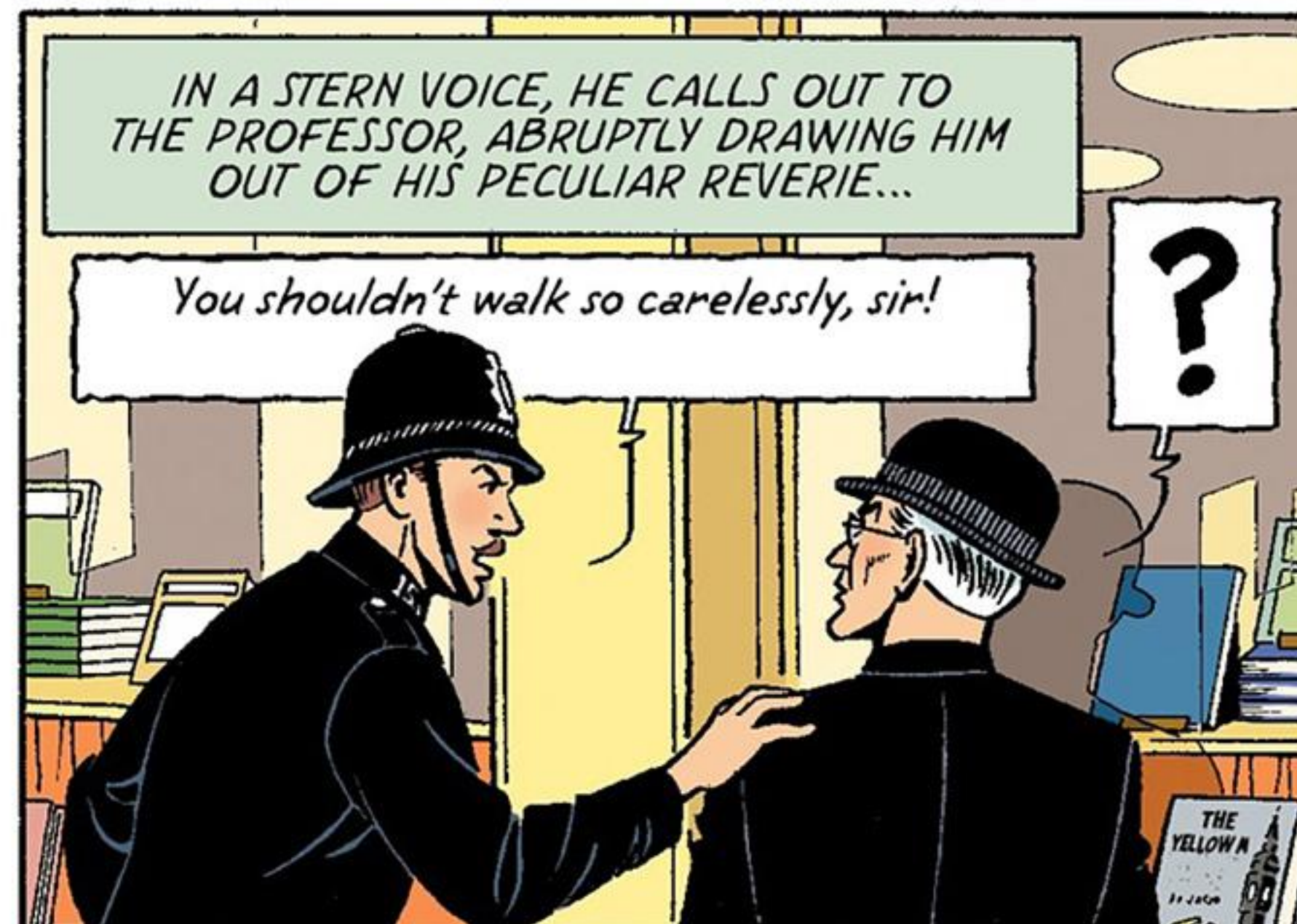
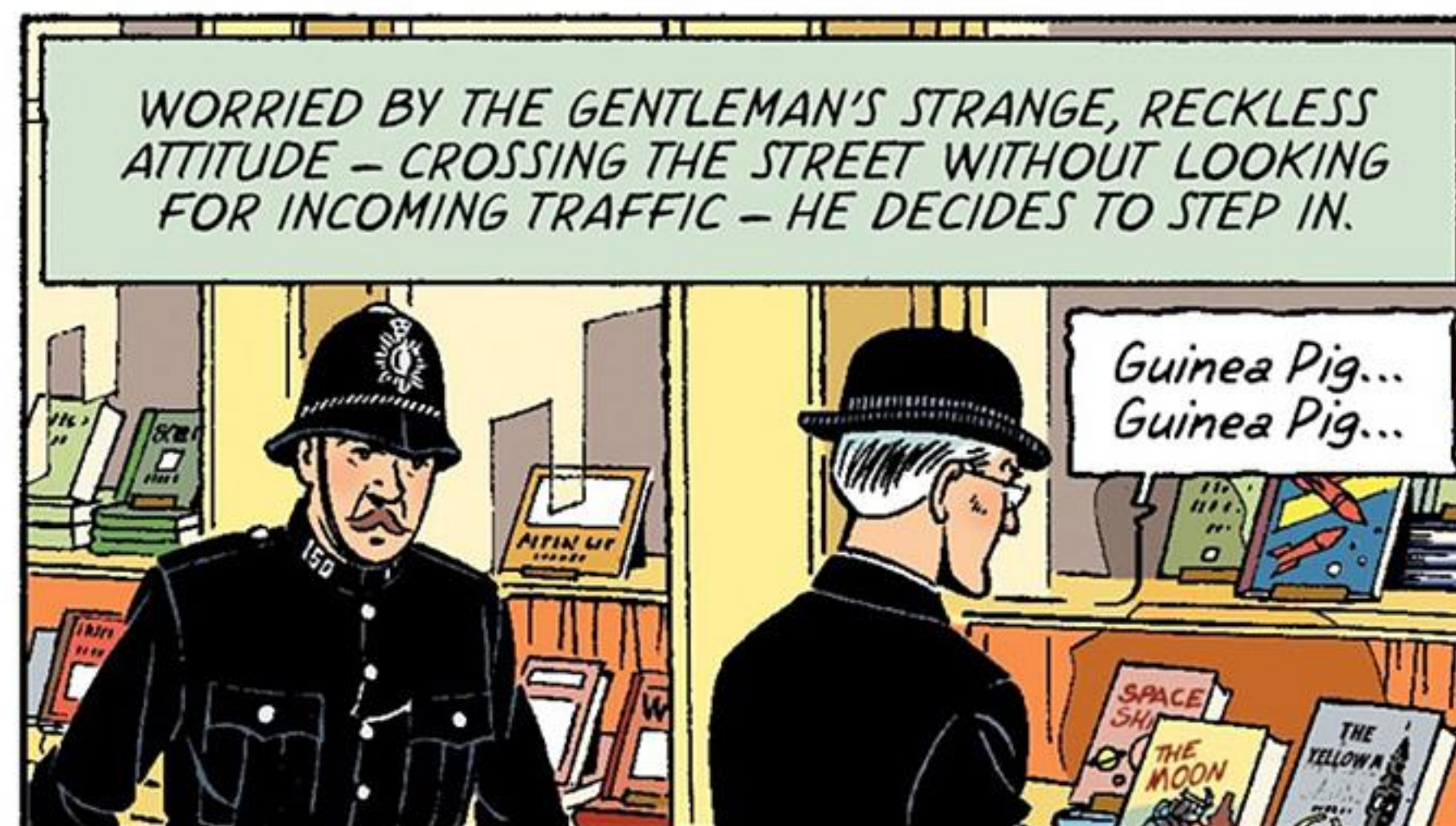
Look out!!!!

BANG







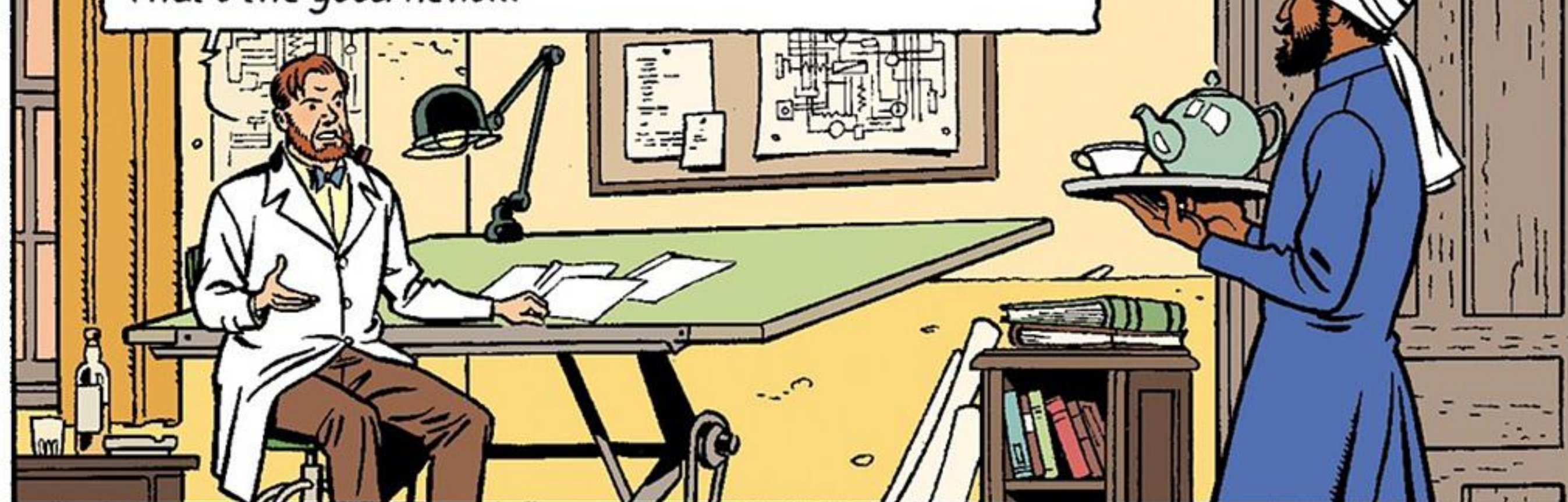


MEANWHILE, MORTIMER HAS FINALLY CONVINCED NASIR TO OPEN THE DOOR TO HIS LABORATORY. A DELICIOUSLY IRONIC SITUATION, BUT MORTIMER HAS QUICKLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE FEARS OF HIS MANSERVANT RESTED ON A TANGIBLE FACT...



AND IT TAKES THE ENTIRE NIGHT BEFORE HE IS FINALLY ABLE TO TRY HIS HAND AT THE BEGINNING OF AN EXPLANATION. HAVING GONE OVER HIS KNOWLEDGE OF HOW THE TELECEPHALOSCOPE OPERATES ONCE AGAIN, HE'S REACHED AN ALARMING CONCLUSION...

As you suspect, you were the victim of an optical illusion. That's the good news...



The bad news is that the Wave is drawn to an attraction pole that lies beyond the outside walls established according to my plans. It doesn't go from matter to mind... but from matter to another, protean matter which seems to feed off its energy... and possibly off the substrates it carries...



The Wave seems to keep memories, snapshots, in its optical sub-structure. A series of illusions, if you will, like the mirages that sometimes appear above the sands of the desert.



An elegant image, sahib. But what I saw was in no way elegant.

I understand. There is some sort of devilry in that blasted Telecephaloscope that still escapes us. The only way to get a clearer idea and advance our projects...



...would be to use its rays on someone, now that I have tuned them to mental frequencies I can control. What we need, in fact, is a guinea pig... Another Olrik!



UNKNOWNLY, MORTIMER HAS REACHED THE SAME CONCLUSIONS AS PROFESSOR EVANGELY. AND HE HAS NO MORE IDEA THAN THE LATTER THAT THE MAN ONCE KNOWN AS GUINEA PIG IS AT THAT MOMENT STROLLING ALONG A DILAPIDATED DOCK IN THE EAST END.



THE COLONEL APPEARS TO FEEL BETTER, EVEN THOUGH HIS SITUATION IS PUTTING HIM IN A FOUL MOOD...

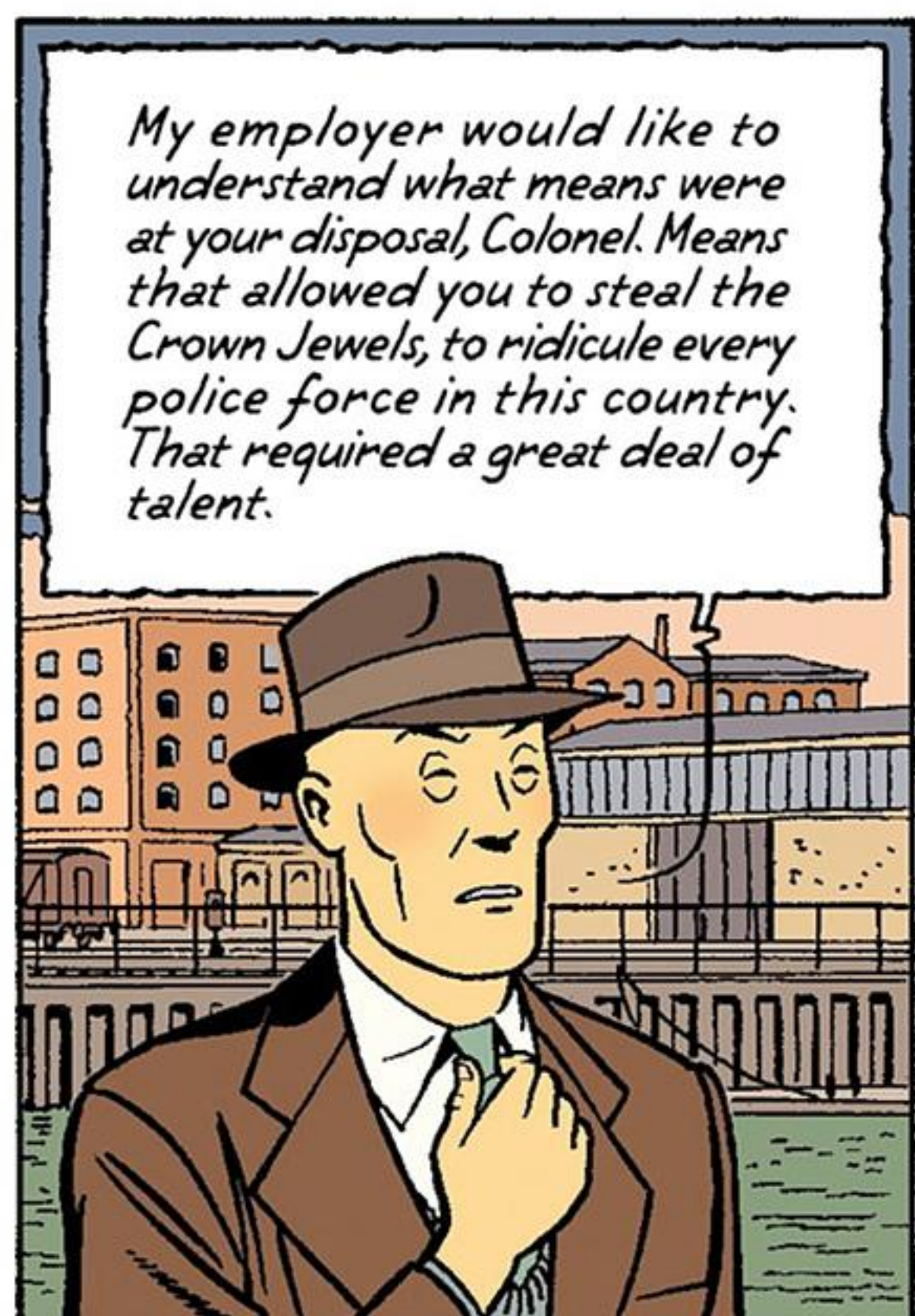
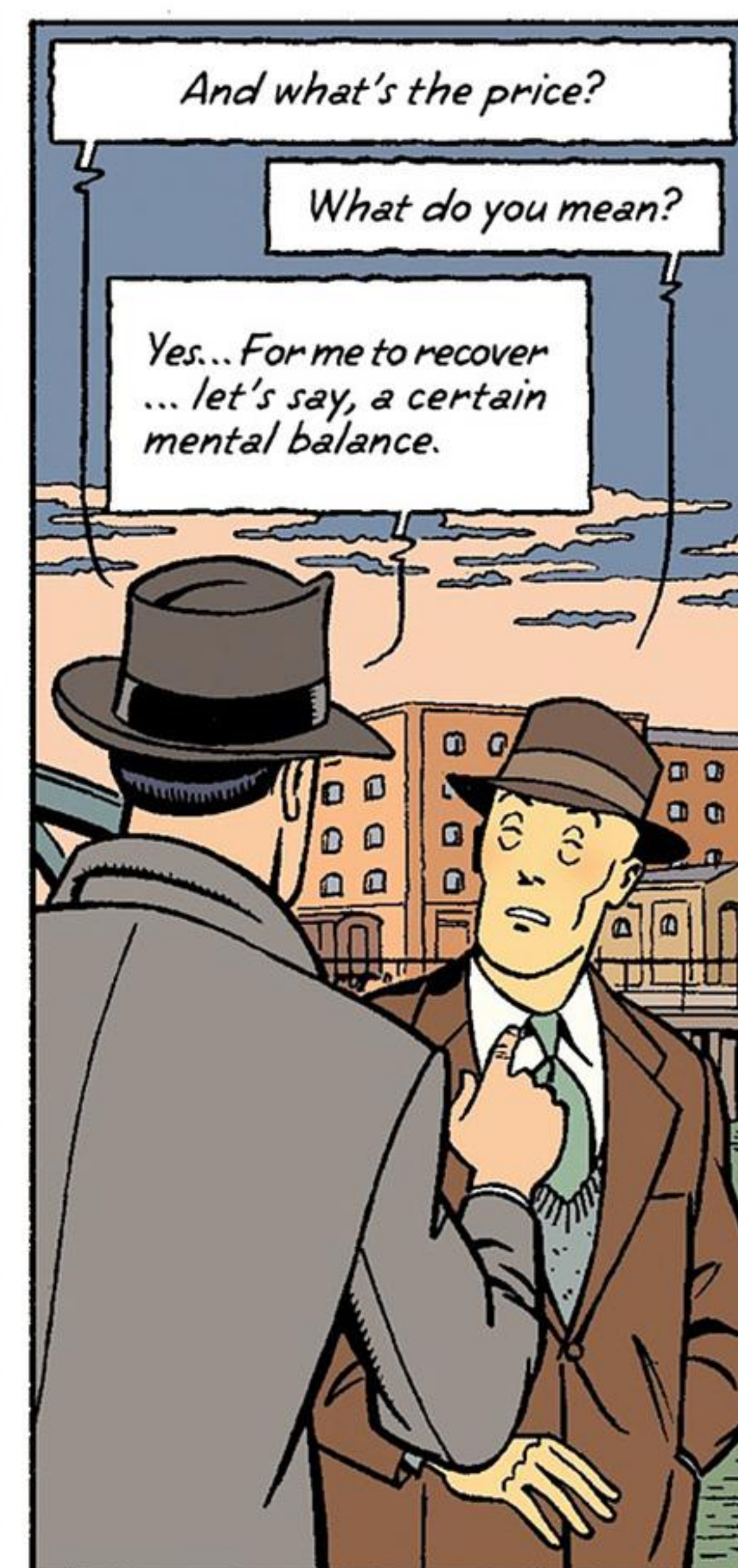
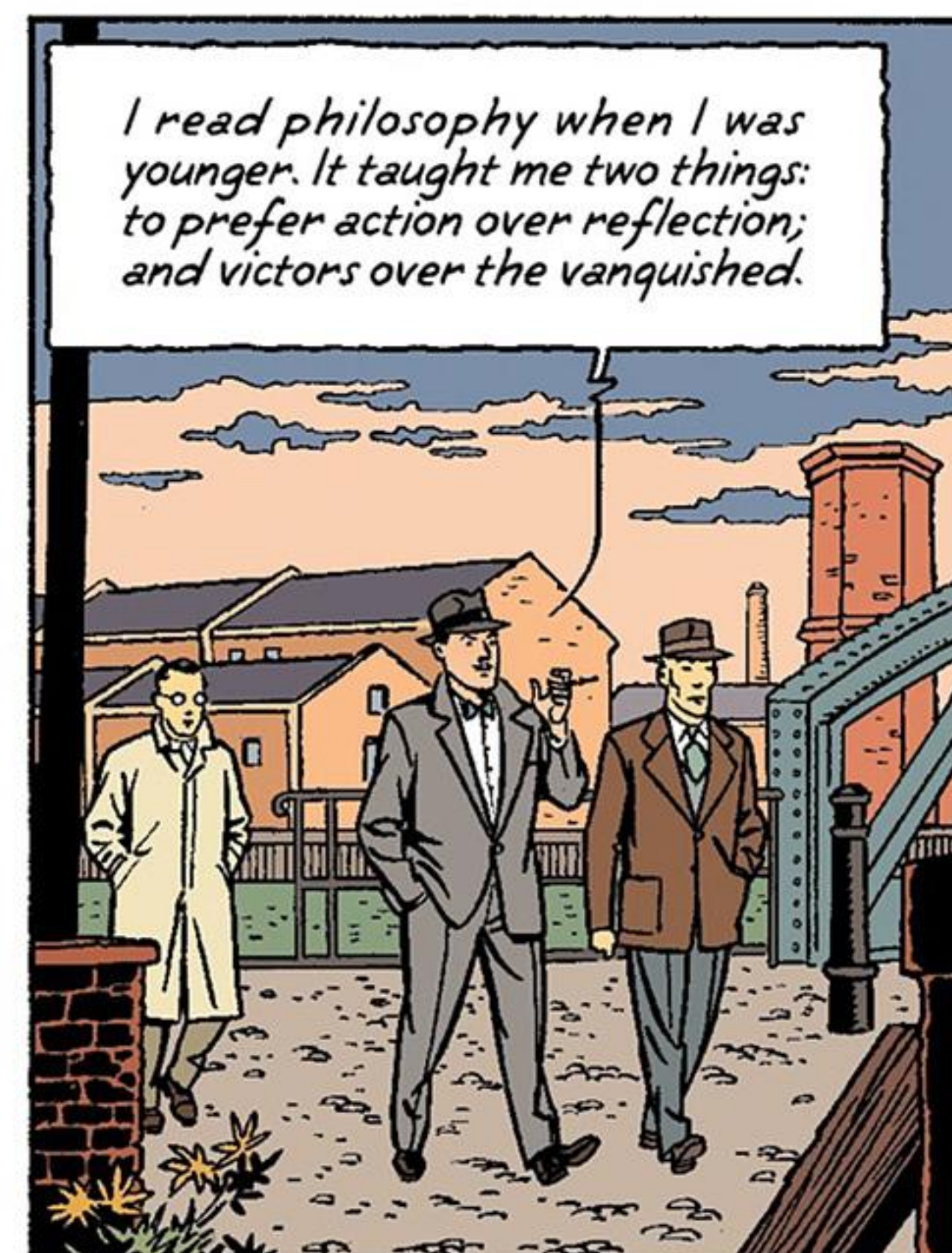
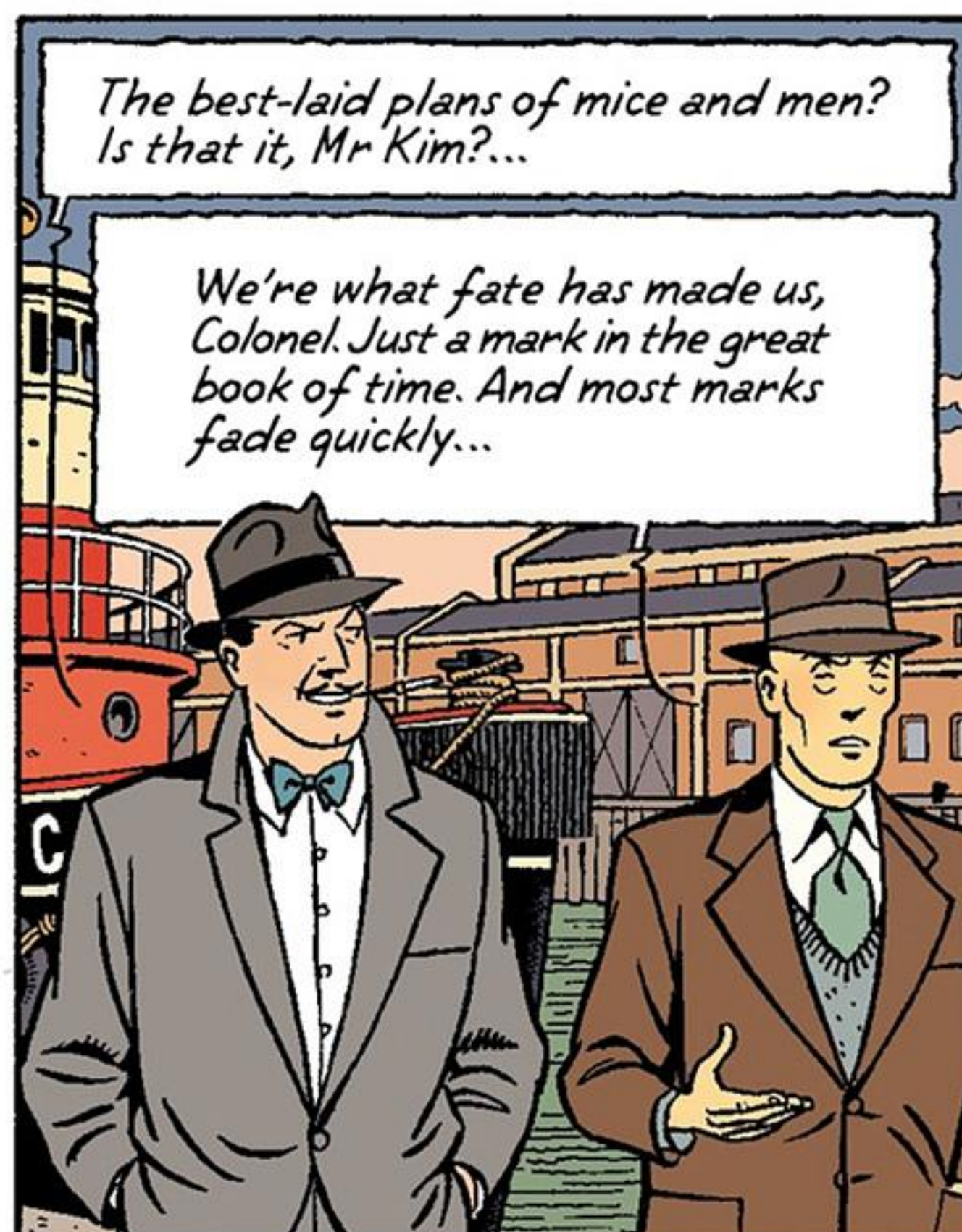
There's no way I'm going to stay in that rotten place much longer.

It all depends on what state you're in.



I depend on Tuog and the drug he gives me. It's the only thing that allows me to carry on. Without it, I feel like my head is about to explode! Especially lately - the pressure is immense...







TAKING HIS TWO MINDERS BY SURPRISE, OLRİK SUDDENLY DASHES AFTER A MOVING SHADOW HE'S CONVINCED HE SAW ROUNDING A CORNER AMONG THE DOCKS.

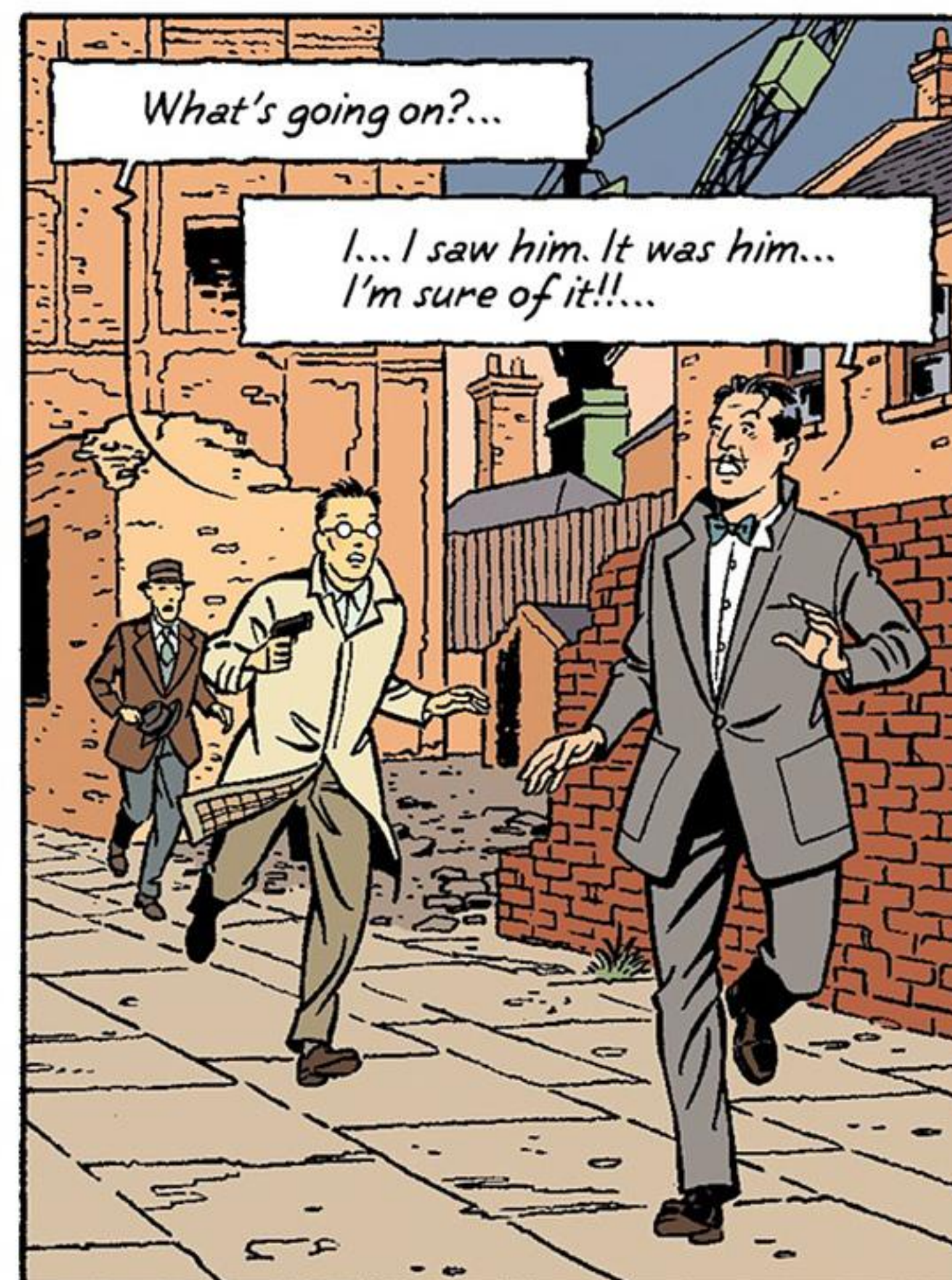
What in the blazes?!

Hey!!!!



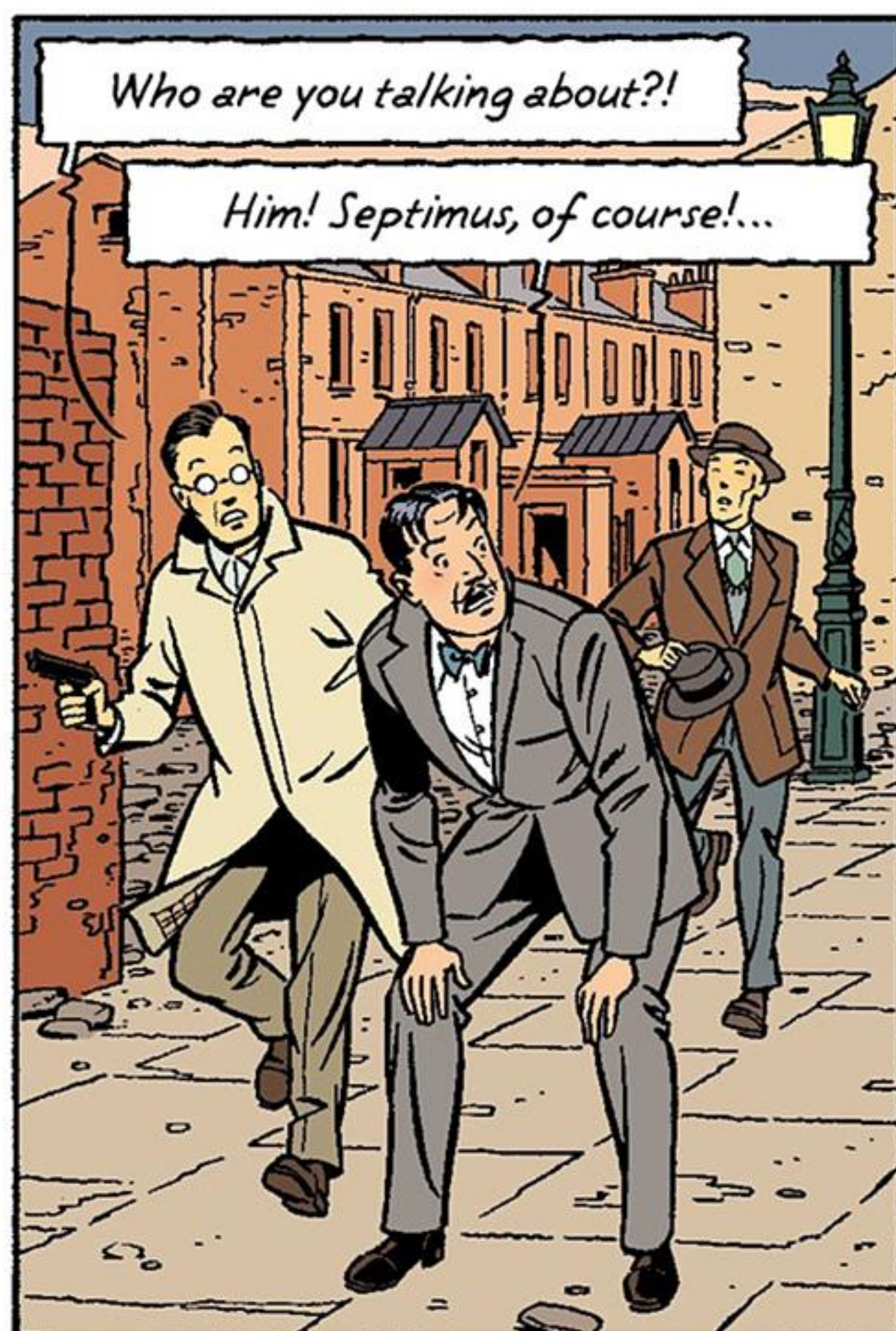
FOR A LITTLE WHILE HE RUNS BREATHLESSLY, BUT WITHOUT FINDING THE TRAIL OF WHAT IS BEGINNING TO FEEL LIKE AN ILLUSION.

He vanished!!!



What's going on?...

I... I saw him. It was him...
I'm sure of it!!...



Who are you talking about?!

Him! Septimus, of course!...



He was walking ... leisurely along... I thought our eyes met. Then, no... He just walked on as if nothing had happened!

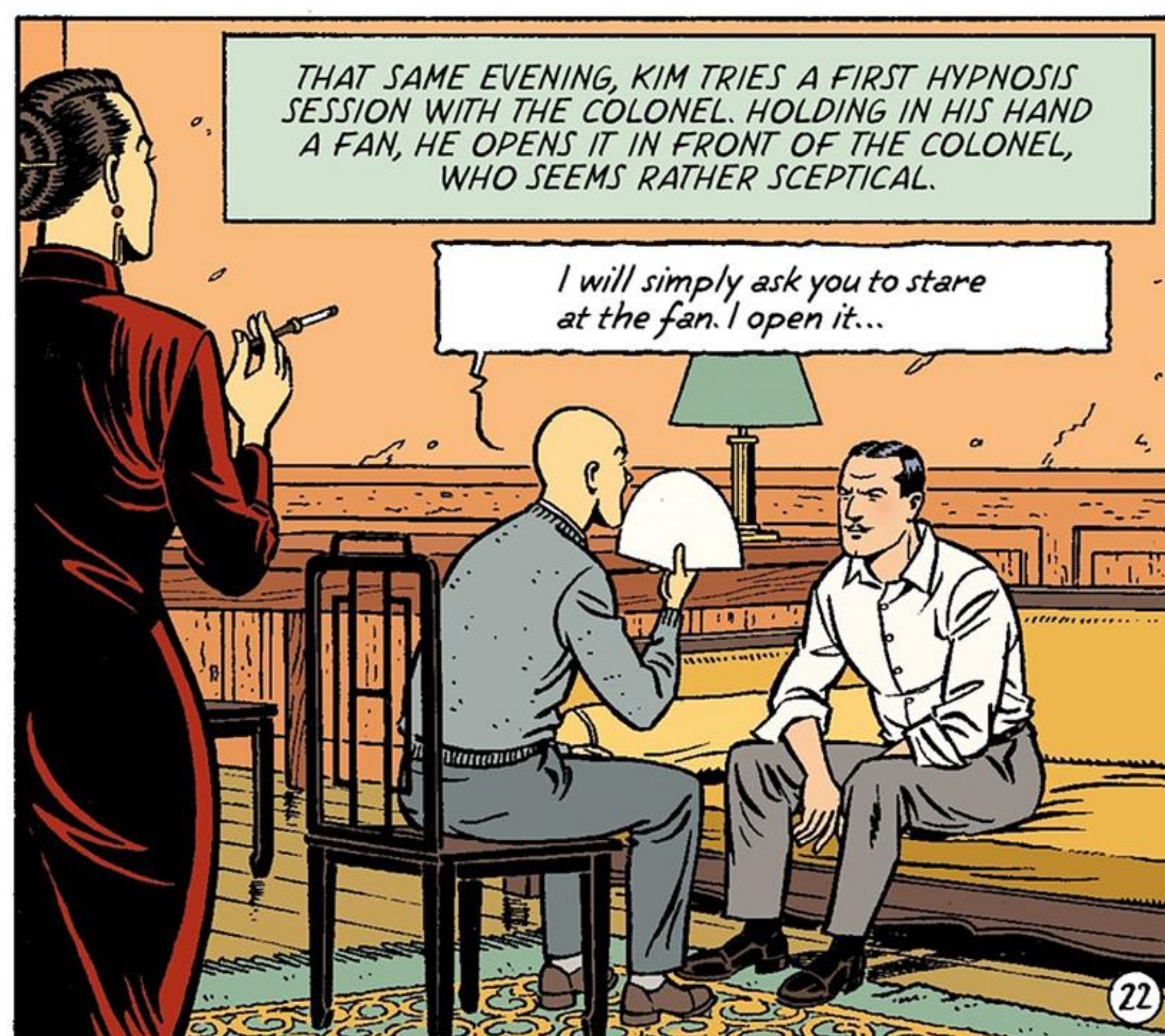
I think we'd better go back,
Colonel...



AND THE THREE MEN HEAD BACK TO LILY SING'S PLACE OF BUSINESS, NOT SUSPECTING THAT CLOSE BY...

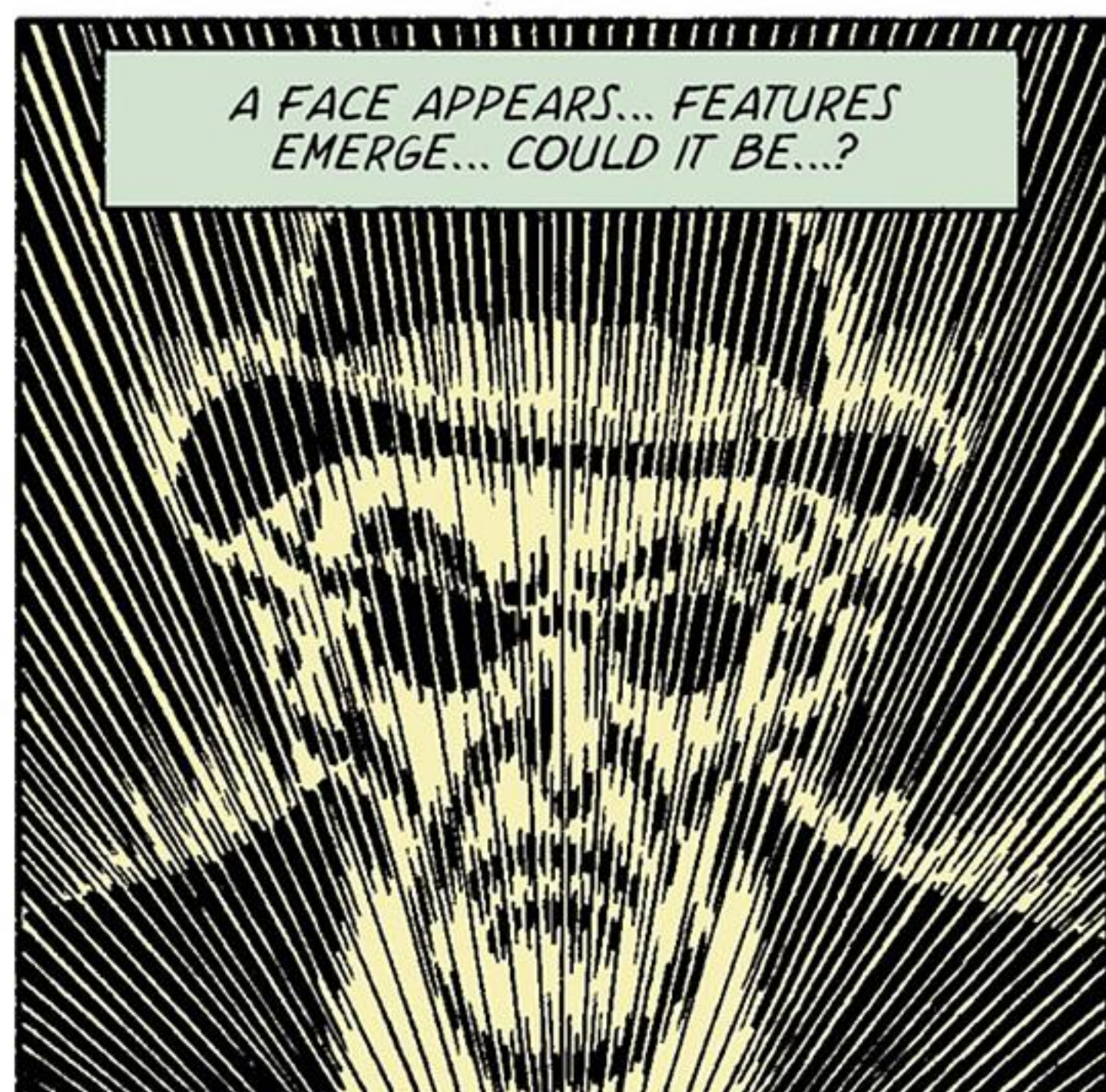
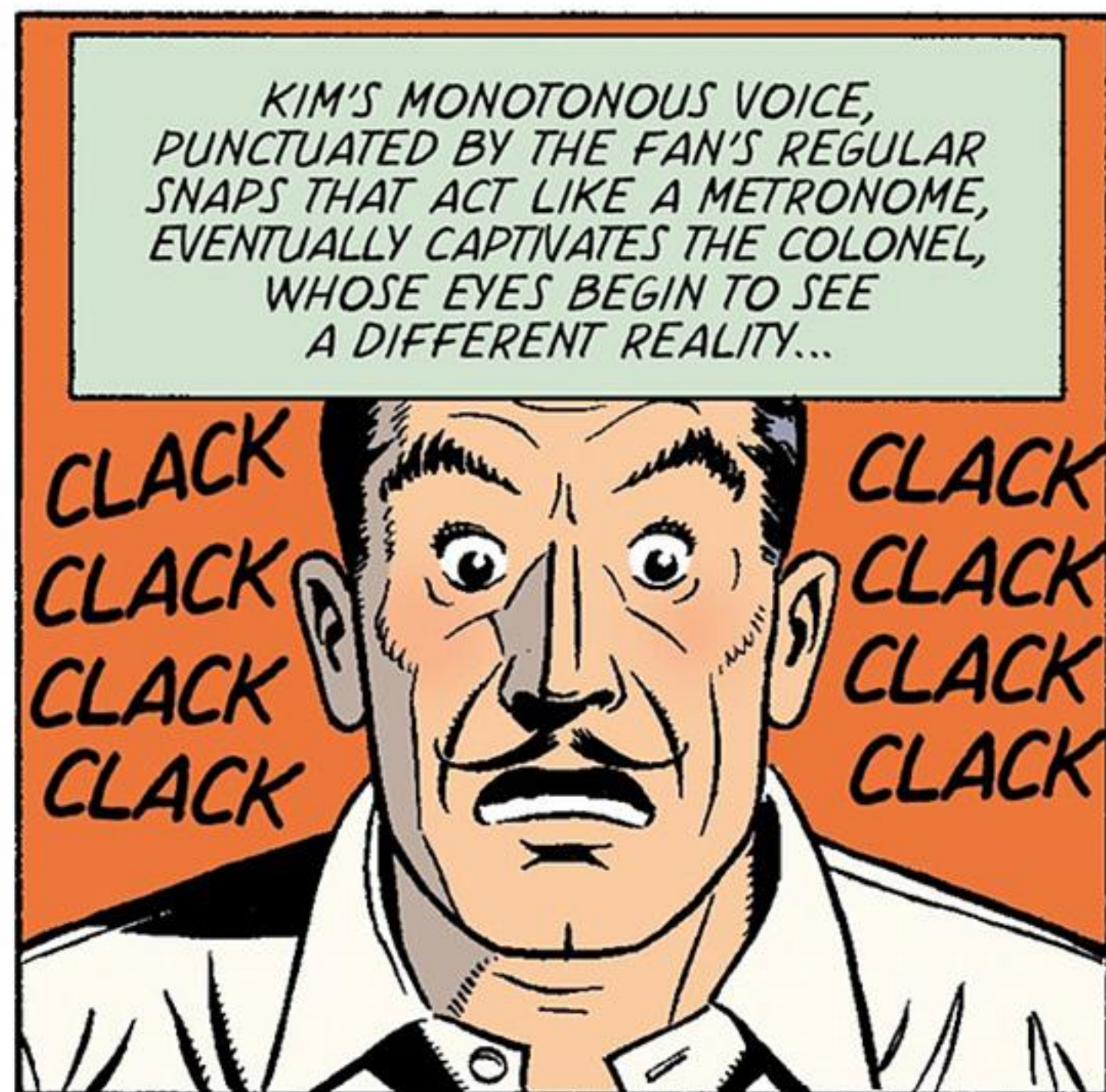
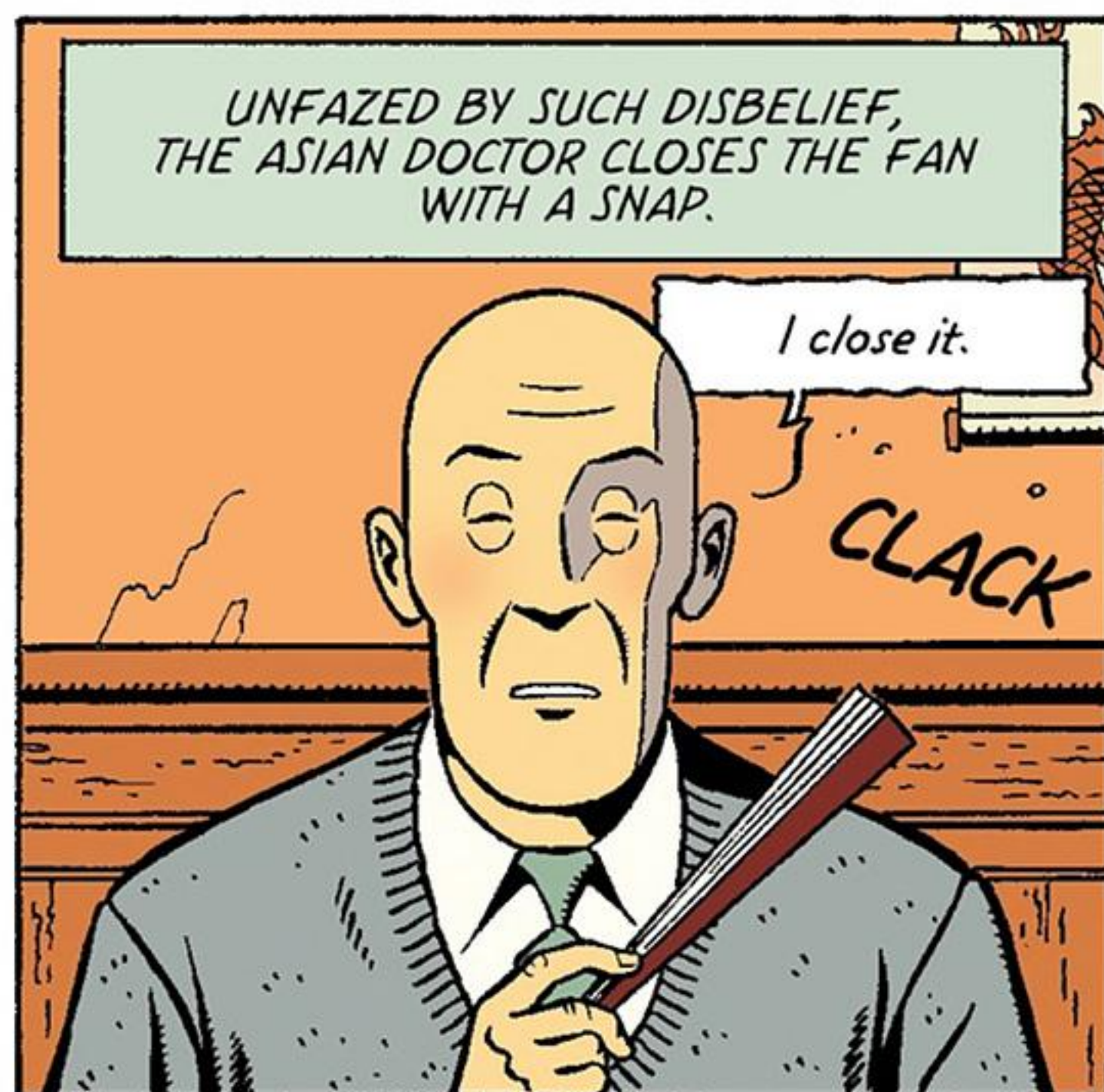


...A FIGURE - NONE OTHER THAN SEPTIMUS'S - ENTERS THE DESOLATE DOCKS AREA. HIS MECHANICAL STRIDE SOUNDS STRANGE IN THAT LOST, UNINHABITED SCENERY, WHERE SOUNDS SNAP HARSHLY, AS IF DEPRIVED OF LIFE.



THAT SAME EVENING, KIM TRIES A FIRST HYPNOSIS SESSION WITH THE COLONEL. HOLDING IN HIS HAND A FAN, HE OPENS IT IN FRONT OF THE COLONEL, WHO SEEMS RATHER SCEPTICAL.

I will simply ask you to stare
at the fan. I open it...



INSIDE THE COLONEL'S FEVERISH MIND, THE IMAGE OF SEPTIMUS MULTIPLIES AS IF THE PROFESSOR HAD ENDLESSLY DUPLICATED HIMSELF. AND ALL OF THEM, IN A DULL VOICE, TAKE UP THE SAME NAGGING CHANT...



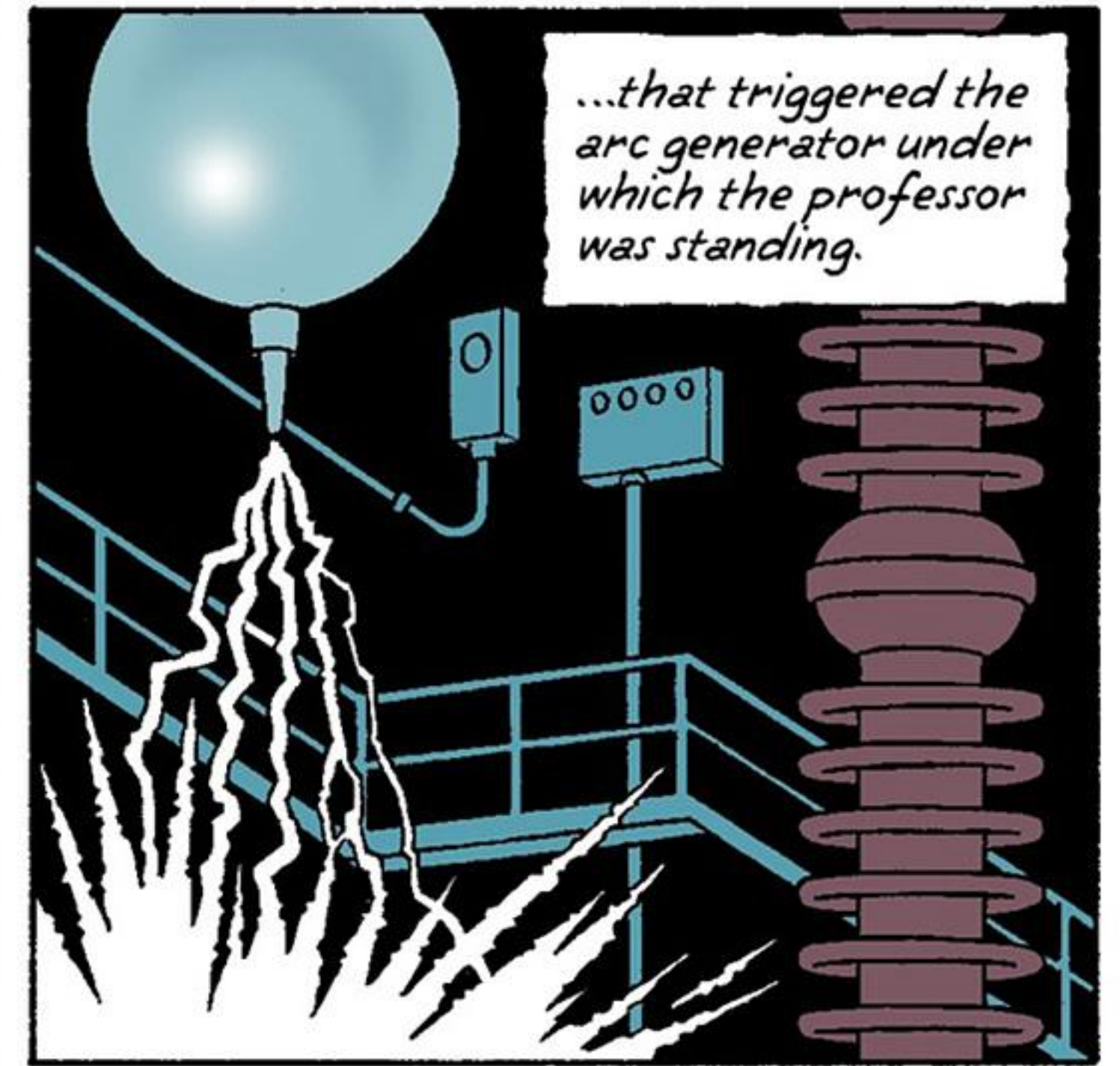
Septimus is dead, Colonel. Remember his end...



You were the one who pushed the button...



...that triggered the arc generator under which the professor was standing.



I... I destroyed him, yes... But ... he... He came back... Someone found him ... in ... the wave... In the folds of the wave...

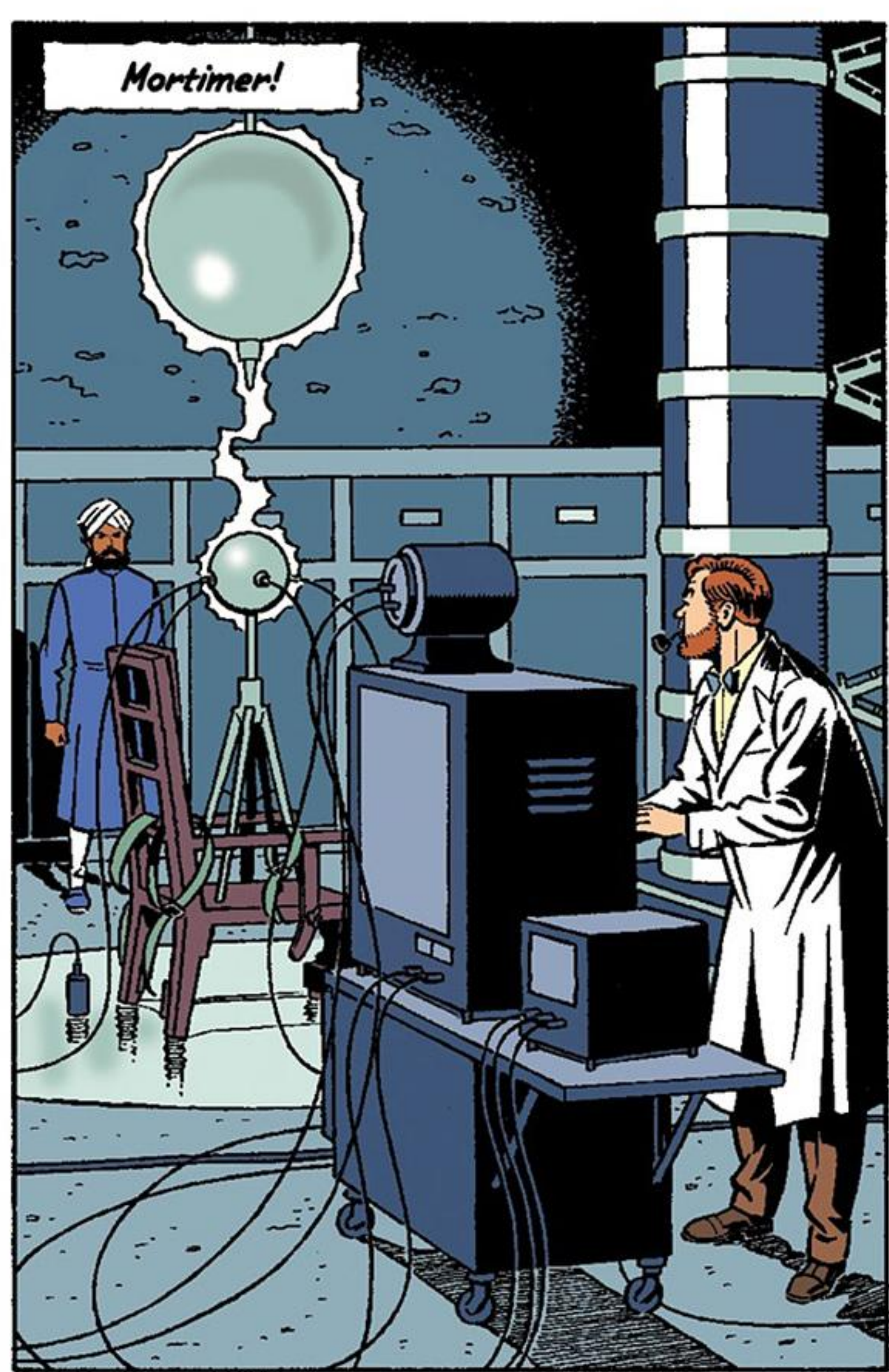
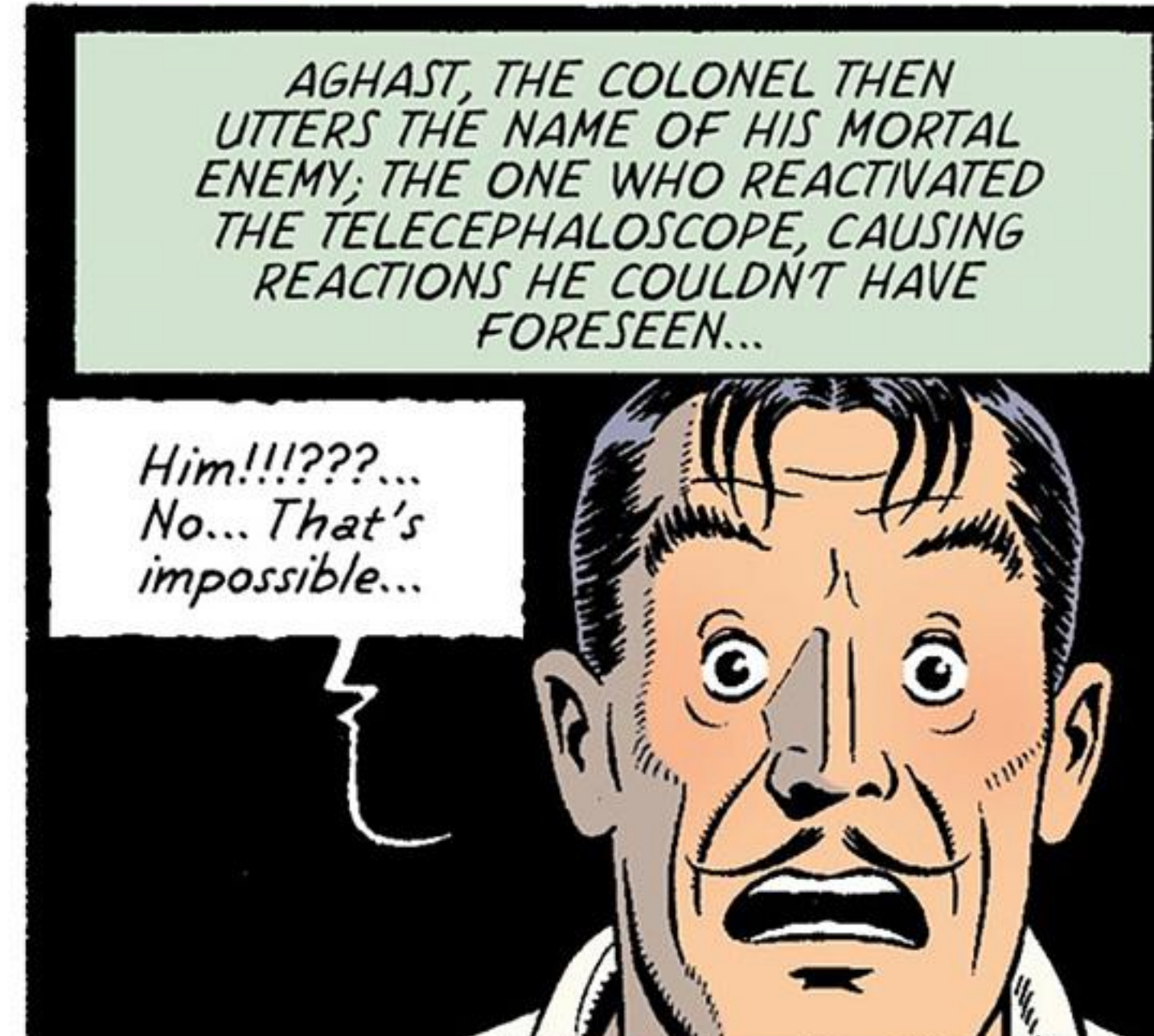
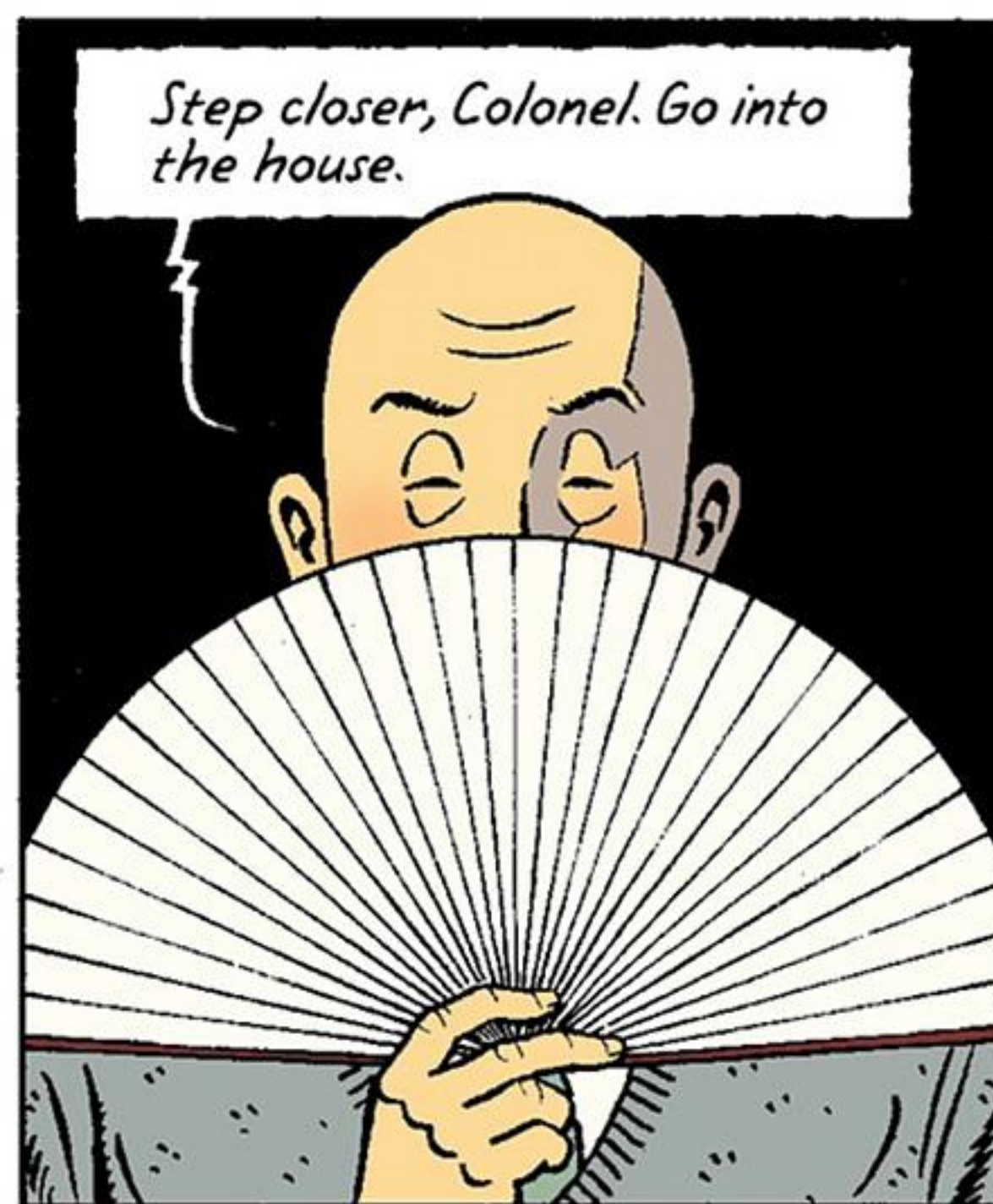


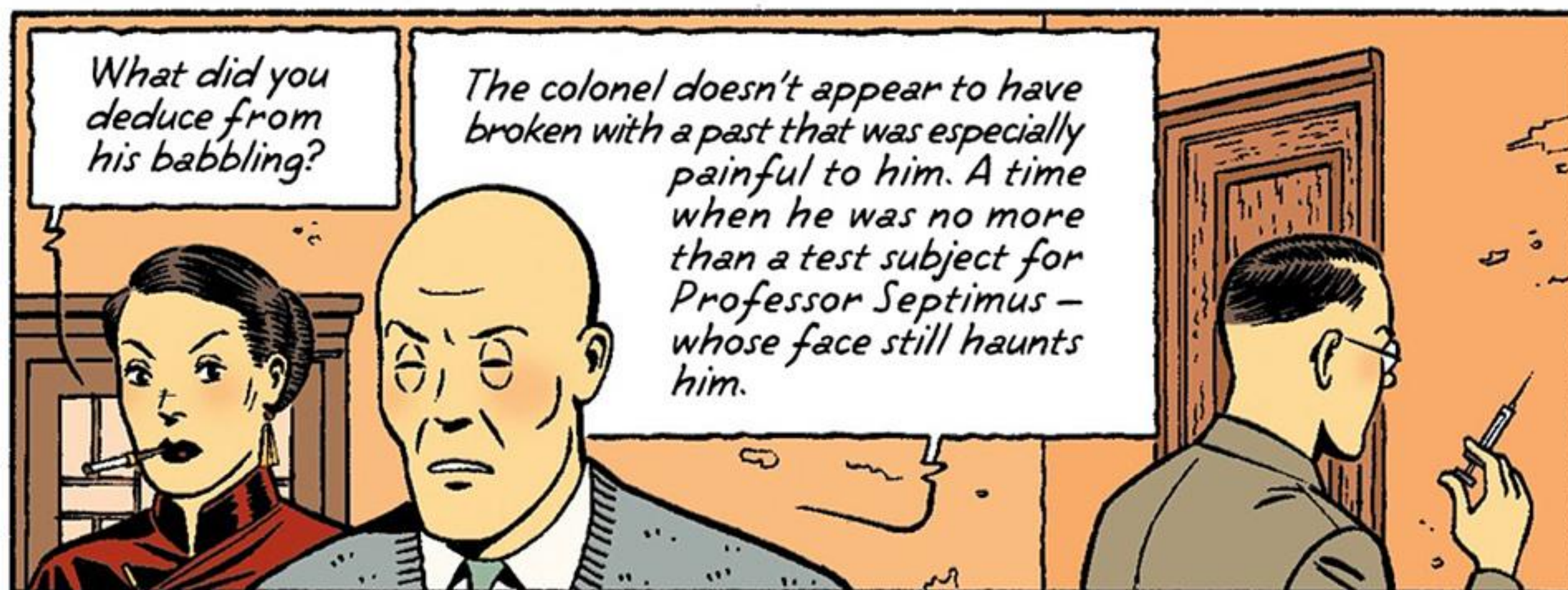
Someone?... Who?... Stare at the fan, Colonel...



Yes... I... I see the house where he continues his research...

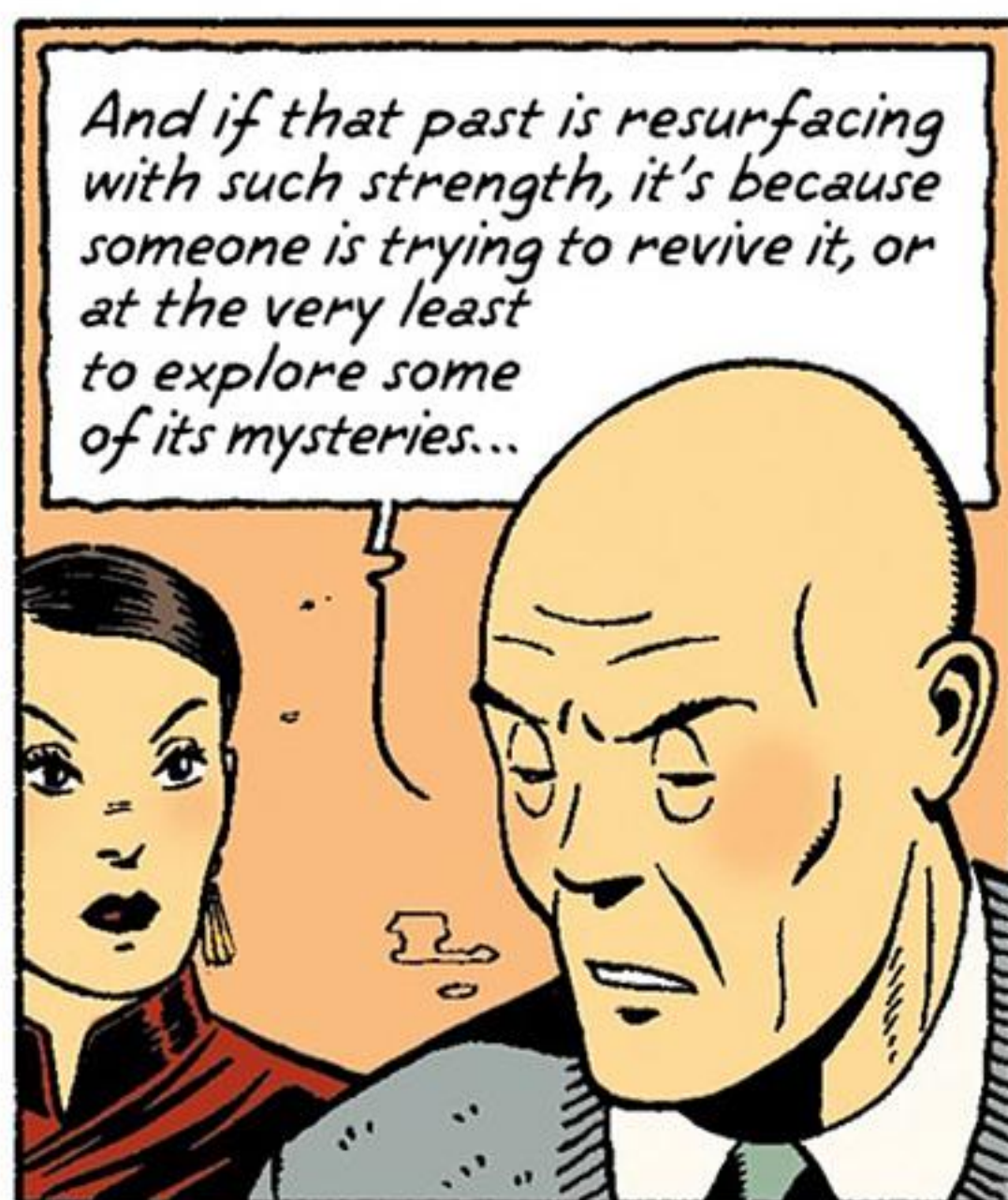




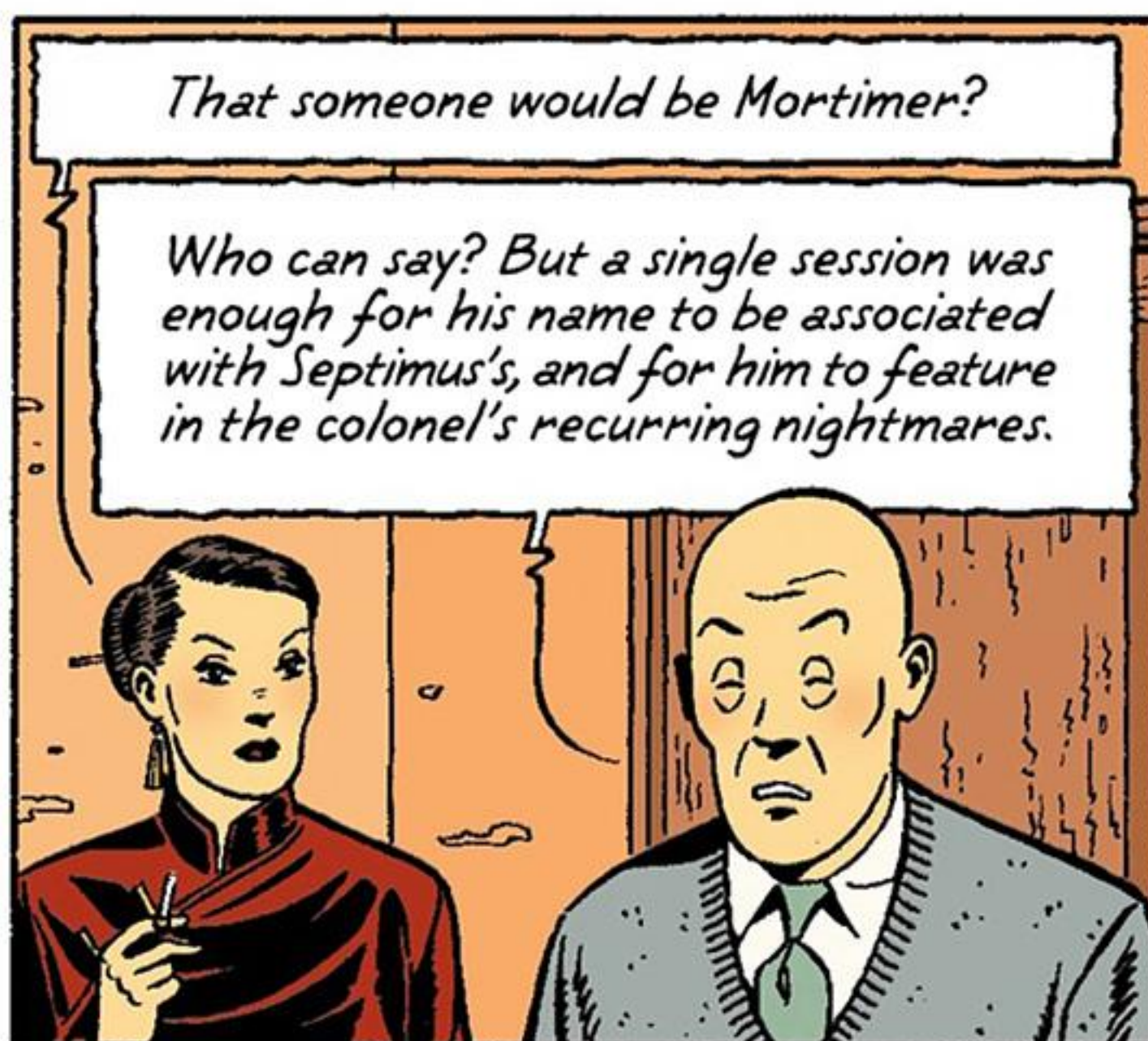


What did you deduce from his babbling?

The colonel doesn't appear to have broken with a past that was especially painful to him. A time when he was no more than a test subject for Professor Septimus — whose face still haunts him.



And if that past is resurfacing with such strength, it's because someone is trying to revive it, or at the very least to explore some of its mysteries...



That someone would be Mortimer?

Who can say? But a single session was enough for his name to be associated with Septimus's, and for him to feature in the colonel's recurring nightmares.



IT IS ENOUGH FOR LILY SING, WHO LEAVES THE COLONEL IN TUOG'S CARE AND RETIRES.

Good. Make sure he rests. We'll resume the sessions tomorrow morning.



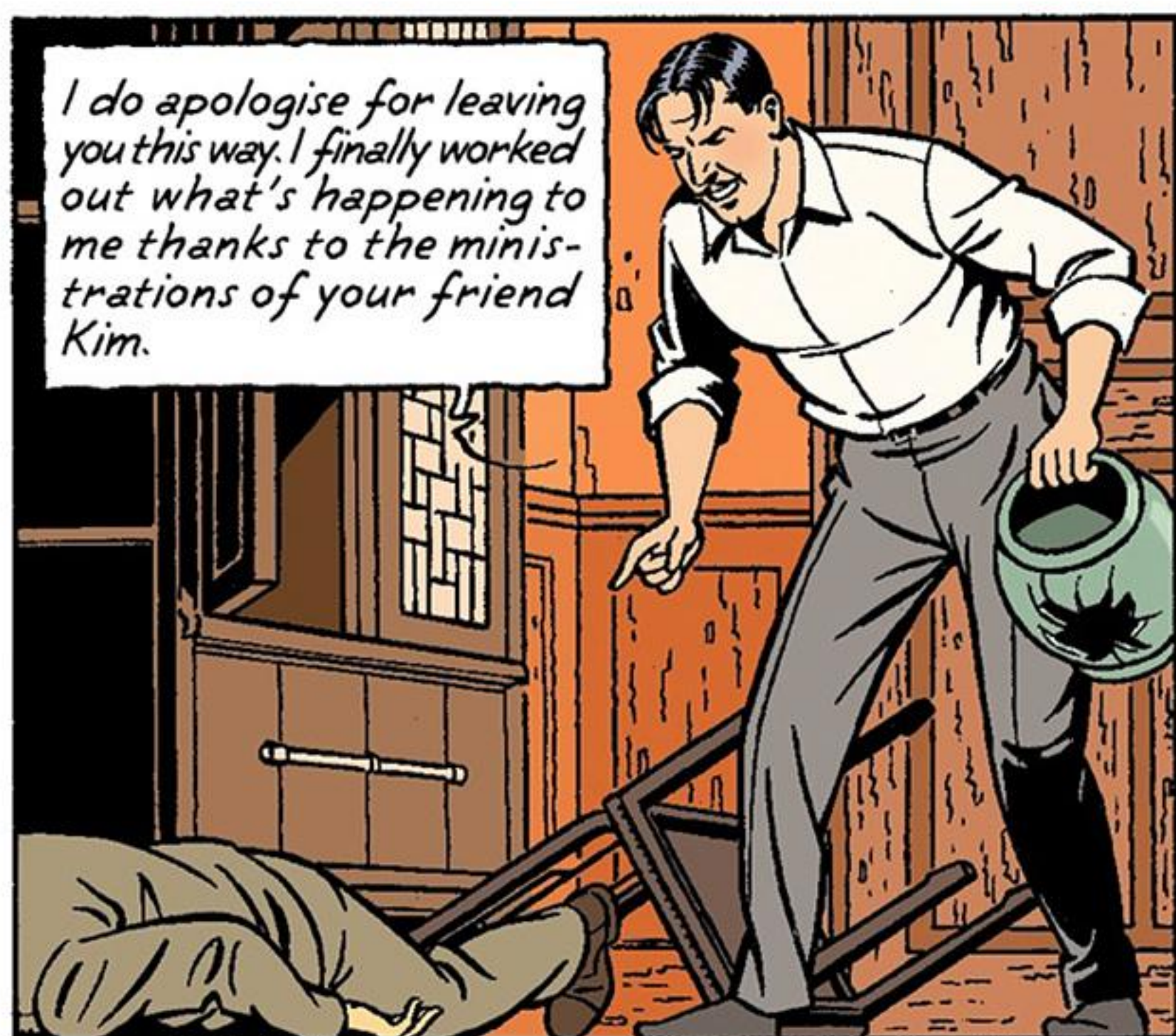
FOLLOWING HIS MISTRESS'S ORDERS, TUOG DOESN'T LEAVE THE COLONEL'S ROOM, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE NIGHT'S QUIET HOURS TO PREPARE MORE PHIALS OF MORPHINE FOR HIS PATIENT.



WHEN SUDDENLY...

Hell! I must be in a really dire shape for you to prepare such a stockpile!

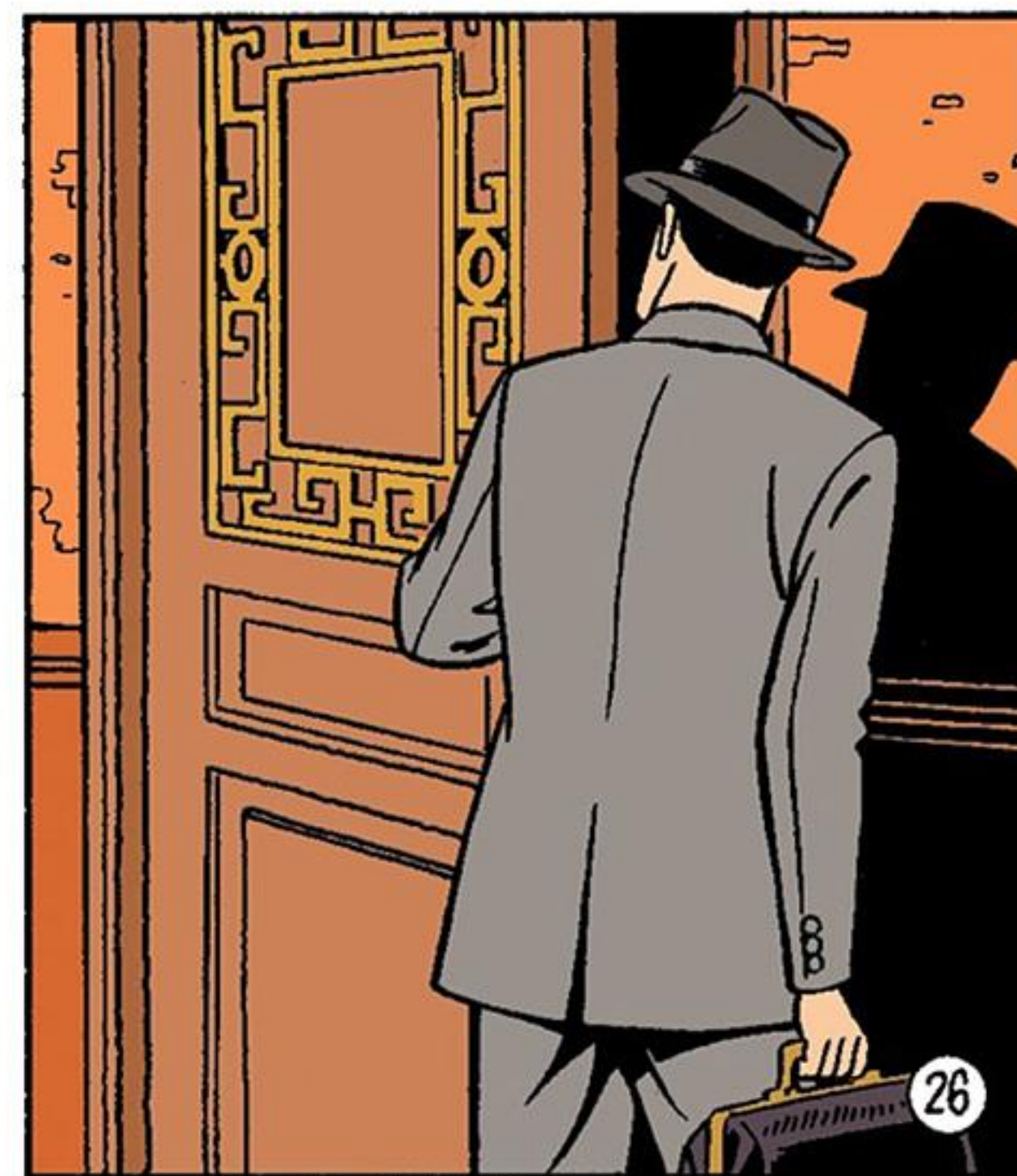
You're too kind, my dear fellow!



I do apologise for leaving you this way. I finally worked out what's happening to me thanks to the ministrations of your friend Kim.



I'll take these. Unfortunately, I will still need them!



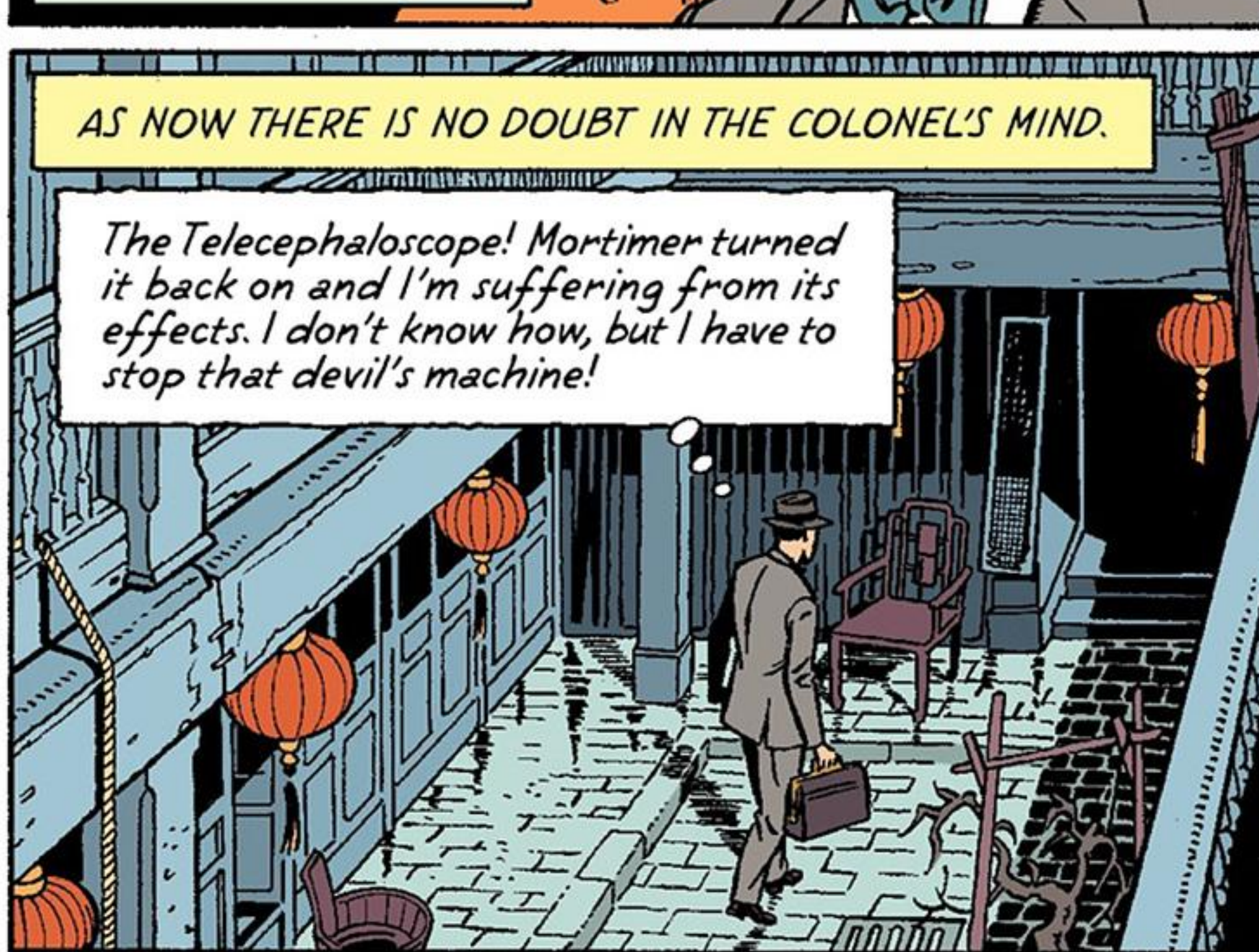
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AND SO THE COLONEL TAKES A SHOT AT FREEDOM, APPARENTLY BACK IN BETTER FORM, EVEN IF HE REMAINS ACUTELY AWARE OF HOW FRAGILE HIS CONDITION IS. NO DOUBT HE HAS PREPARED FOR THIS MOMENT, TORN BETWEEN BOUTS OF REAL DEPRESSION AND A GROWING DESIRE TO RECOVER HIS INDEPENDENCE...



No one in sight... Now's the time.

A SINGLE THOUGHT KEEPS COMING BACK, GIVING HIM NEW-FOUND ENERGY: THAT OF FINDING HIS OLD ENEMY PROFESSOR MORTIMER AND BREAKING HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL!



AS NOW THERE IS NO DOUBT IN THE COLONEL'S MIND.

The Telecephaloscope! Mortimer turned it back on and I'm suffering from its effects. I don't know how, but I have to stop that devil's machine!



BUT EVEN AS LUCK SEEMS TO SMILE ON HIM...

It's open! Curious... It's almost...



...HE FALLS INTO THE TRAP LAID BY LILY SING, WHO'S WAITING IN THE BACK ALLEY WITH KIM.

...too easy!!!!

Well, my dear? Planning on leaving us, were you?



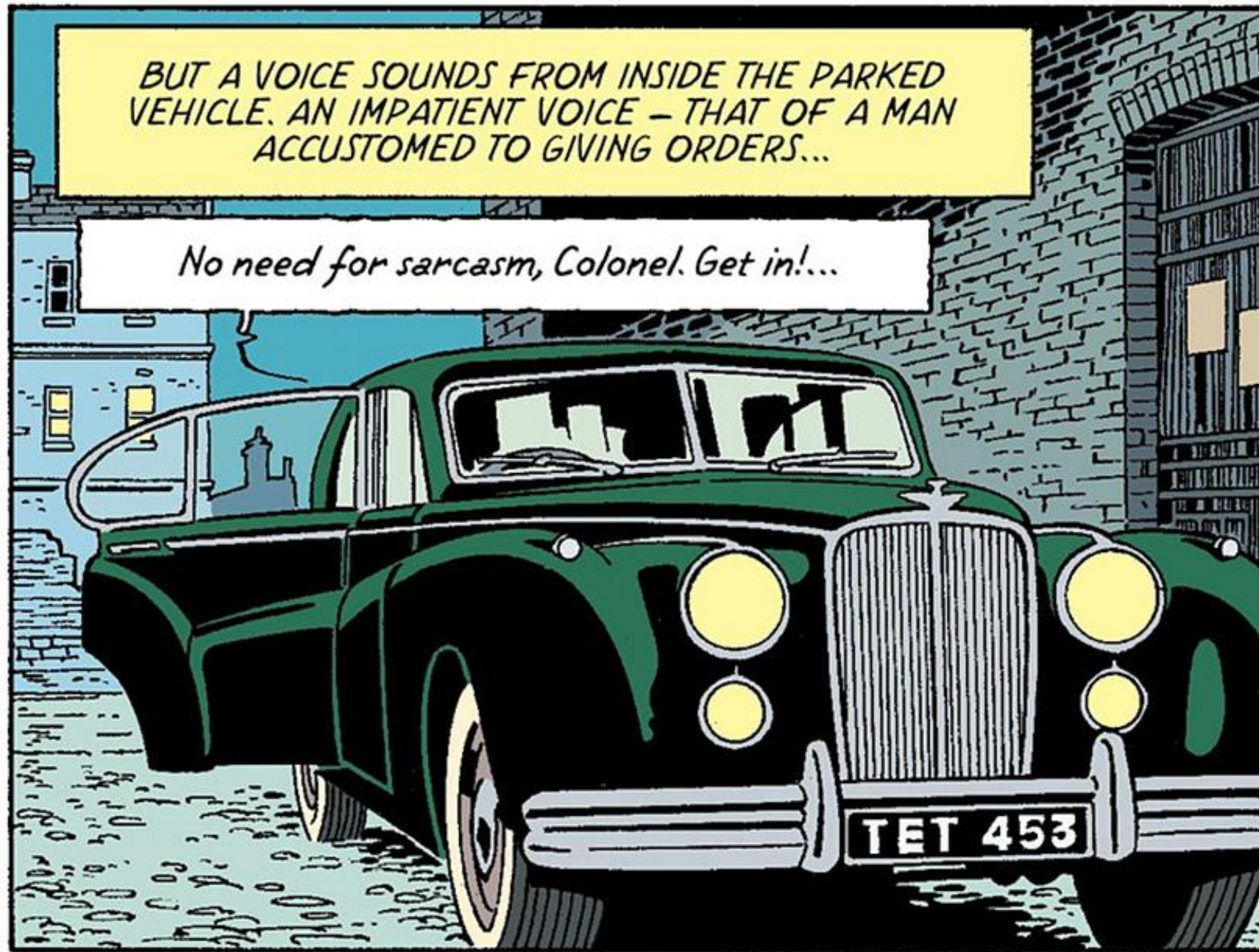
It appears our little session did you good, Colonel...

Let's say it's opened my eyes...



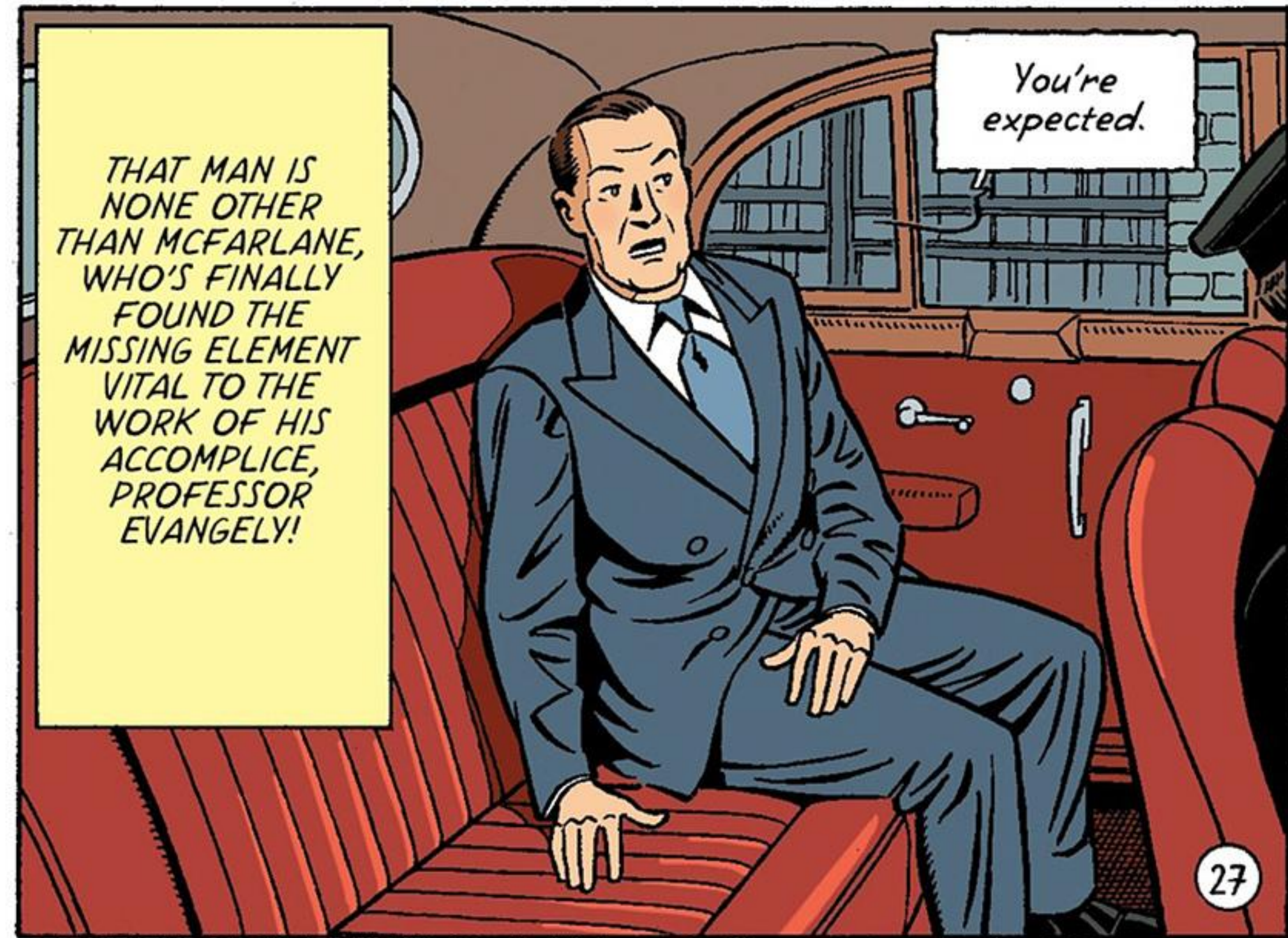
One of my clients wishes to meet you. I think it's time.

Really?... I'm back in business, then. I feel flattered.



BUT A VOICE SOUNDS FROM INSIDE THE PARKED VEHICLE. AN IMPATIENT VOICE - THAT OF A MAN ACCUSTOMED TO GIVING ORDERS...

No need for sarcasm, Colonel. Get in!...

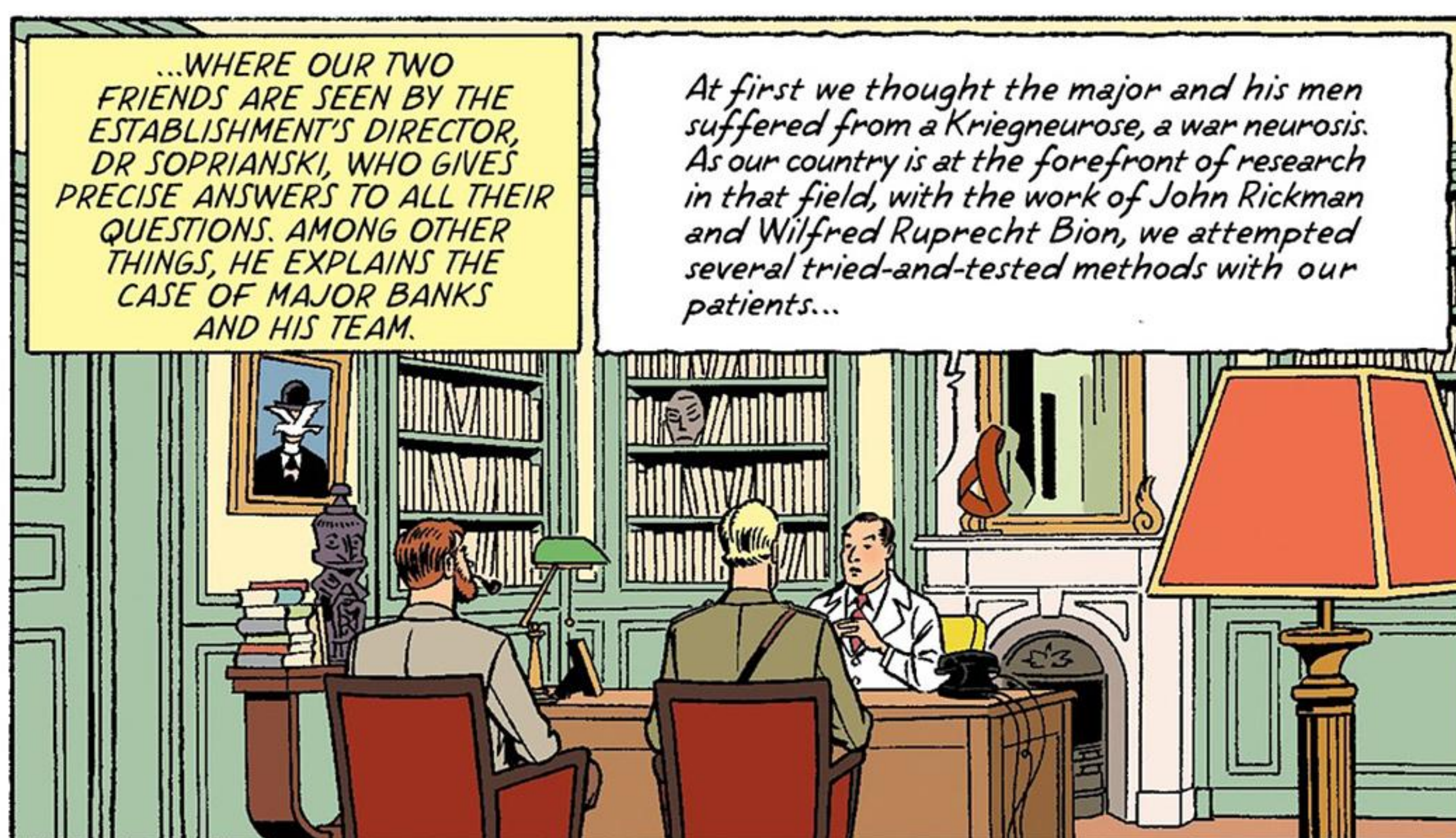


THAT MAN IS NONE OTHER THAN MCFARLANE, WHO'S FINALLY FOUND THE MISSING ELEMENT VITAL TO THE WORK OF HIS ACCOMPLICE, PROFESSOR EVANGELY!

You're expected.

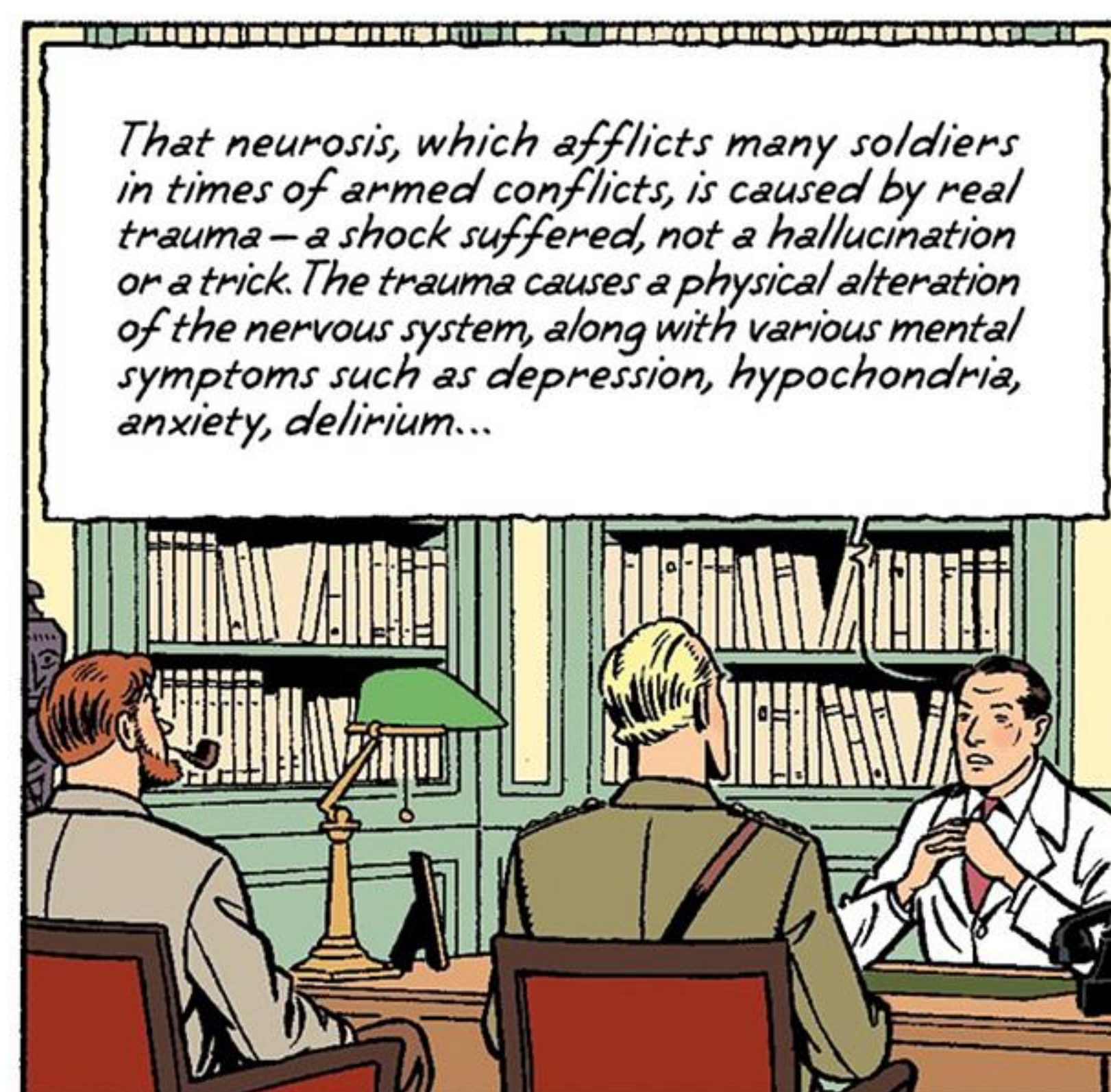


THE NEXT DAY, IN THE SOUTH OF LONDON, A CAR DROPS OFF PROFESSOR MORTIMER AND BLAKE IN FRONT OF BEDLAM HOSPICE...

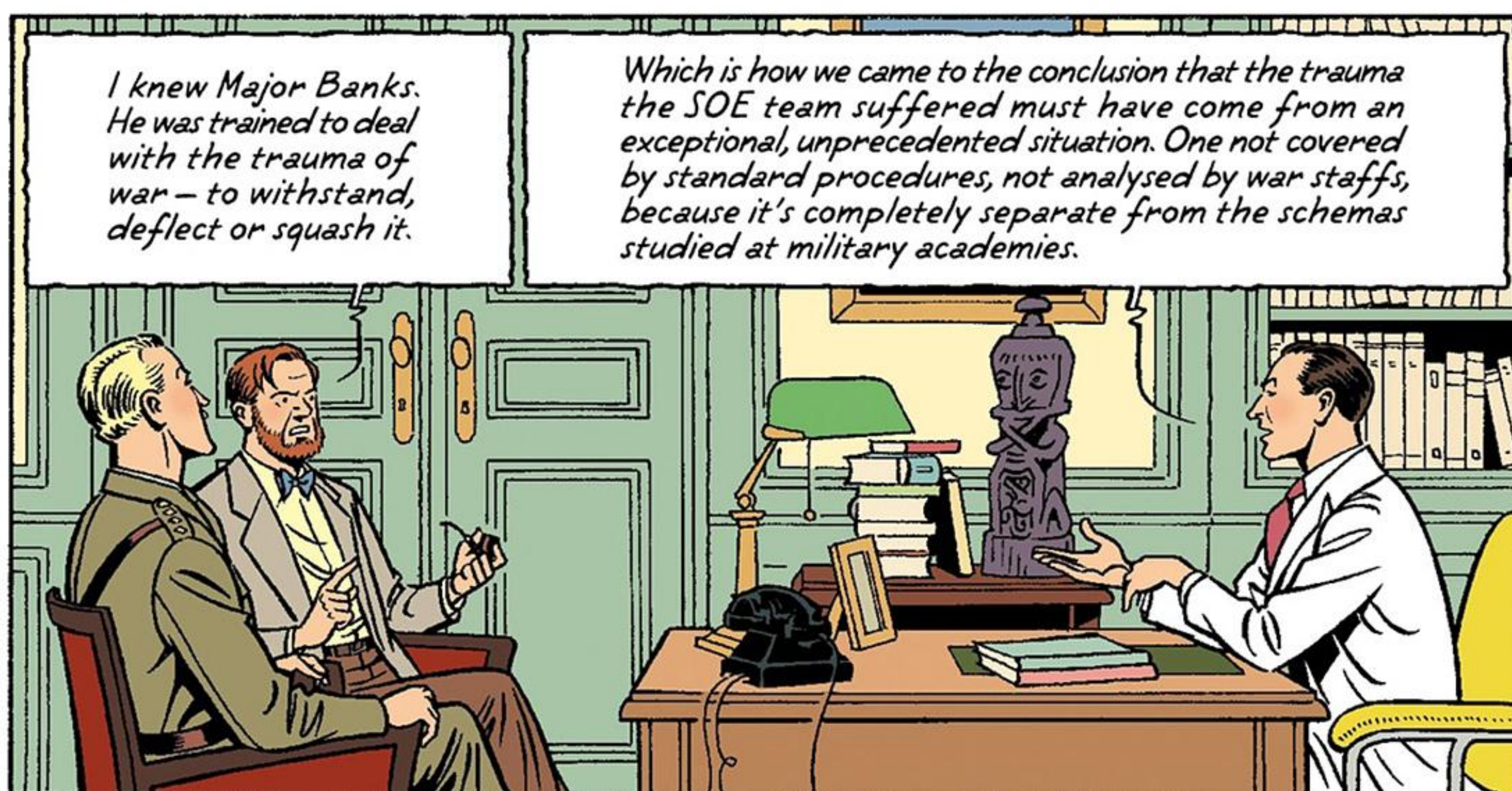


...WHERE OUR TWO FRIENDS ARE SEEN BY THE ESTABLISHMENT'S DIRECTOR, DR SOPRIANSKI, WHO GIVES PRECISE ANSWERS TO ALL THEIR QUESTIONS. AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE EXPLAINS THE CASE OF MAJOR BANKS AND HIS TEAM.

At first we thought the major and his men suffered from a *Kriegneurose*, a war neurosis. As our country is at the forefront of research in that field, with the work of John Rickman and Wilfred Ruprecht Bion, we attempted several tried-and-tested methods with our patients...



That neurosis, which afflicts many soldiers in times of armed conflicts, is caused by real trauma – a shock suffered, not a hallucination or a trick. The trauma causes a physical alteration of the nervous system, along with various mental symptoms such as depression, hypochondria, anxiety, delirium...

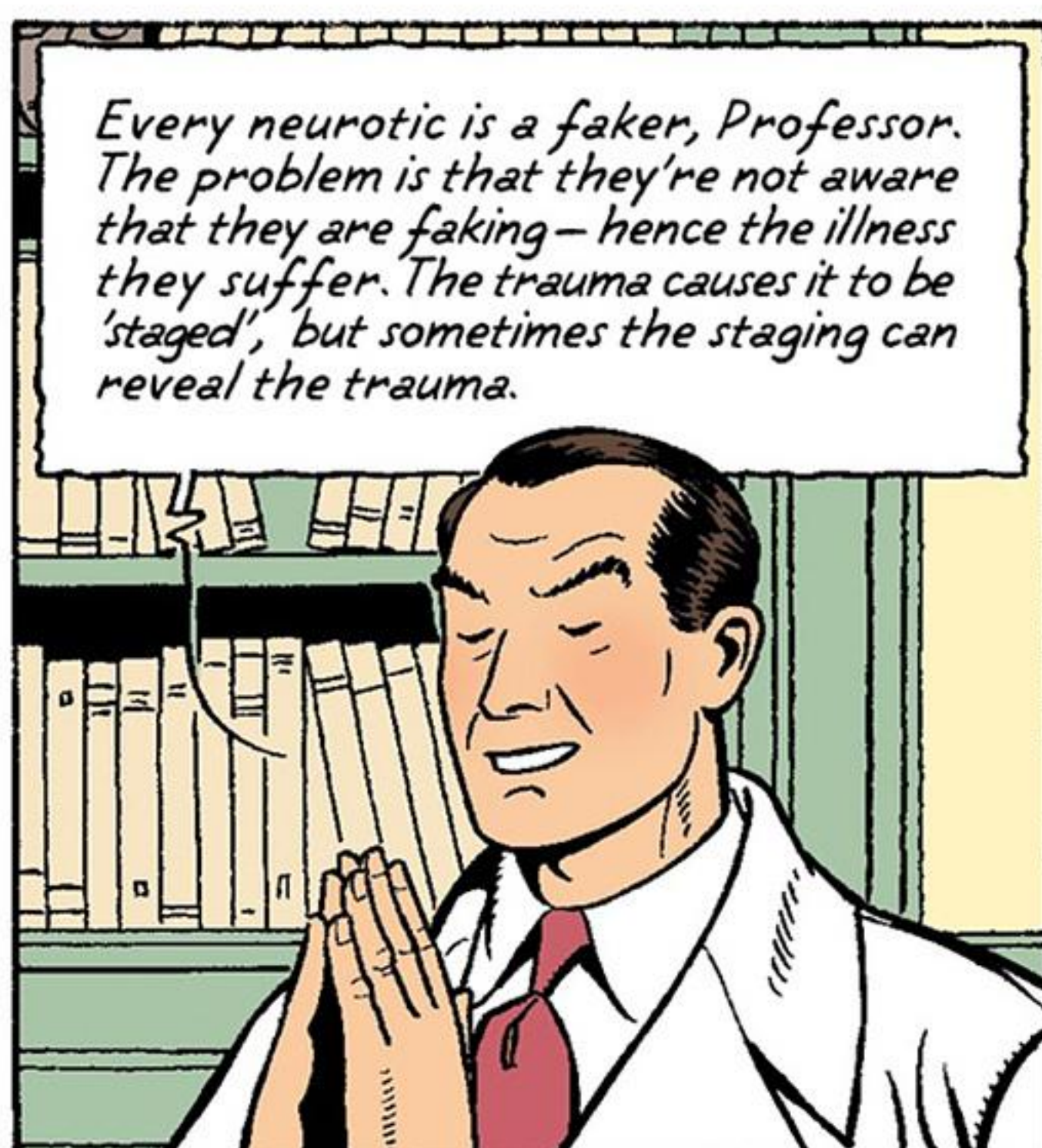


I knew Major Banks. He was trained to deal with the trauma of war – to withstand, deflect or squash it.

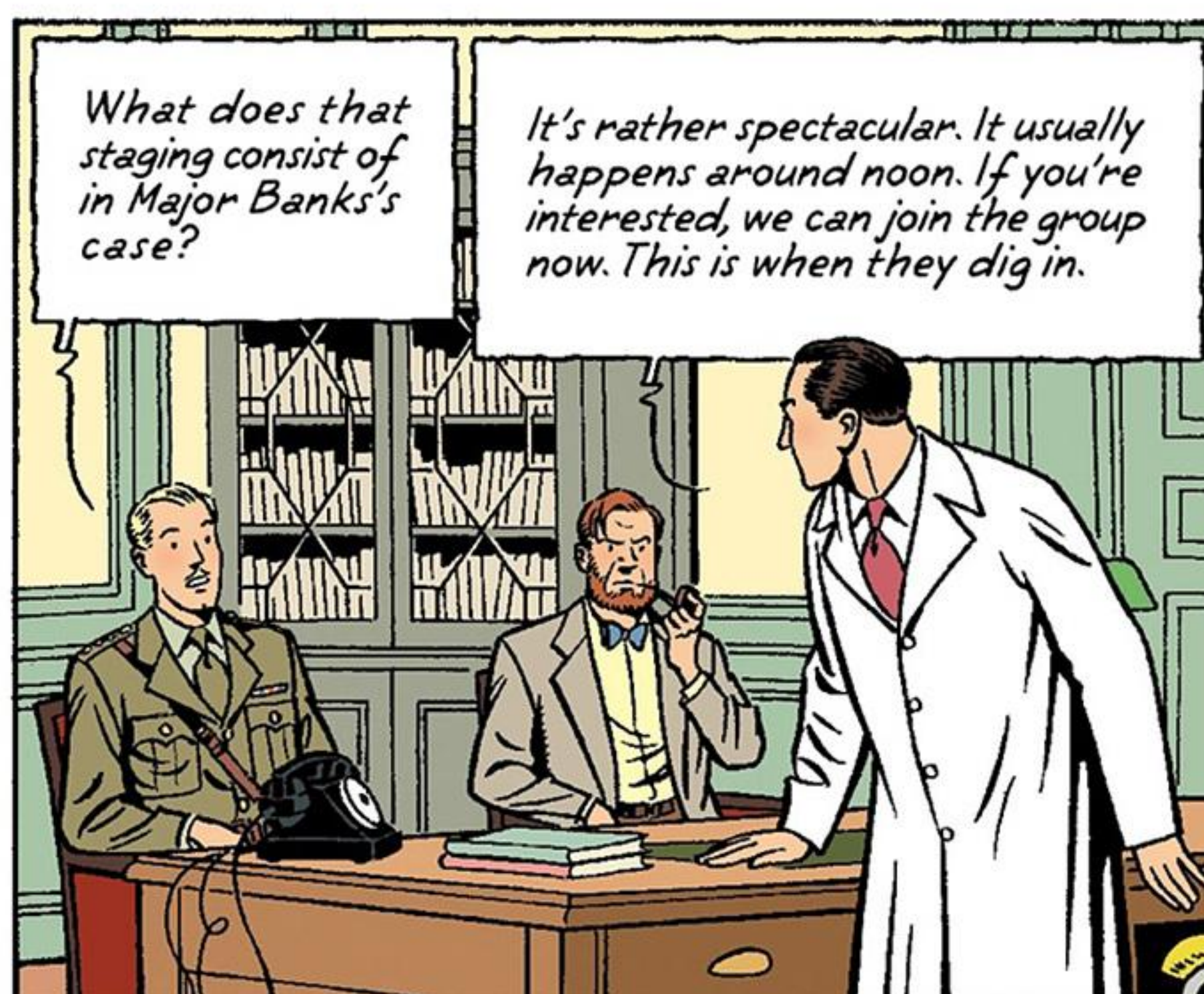
Which is how we came to the conclusion that the trauma the SOE team suffered must have come from an exceptional, unprecedented situation. One not covered by standard procedures, not analysed by war staffs, because it's completely separate from the schemas studied at military academies.



War is a succession of exceptional situations, Doctor. We experienced it ourselves. Besides, Major Banks was never a faker using tricks.



Every neurotic is a faker, Professor. The problem is that they're not aware that they are faking – hence the illness they suffer. The trauma causes it to be 'staged', but sometimes the staging can reveal the trauma.



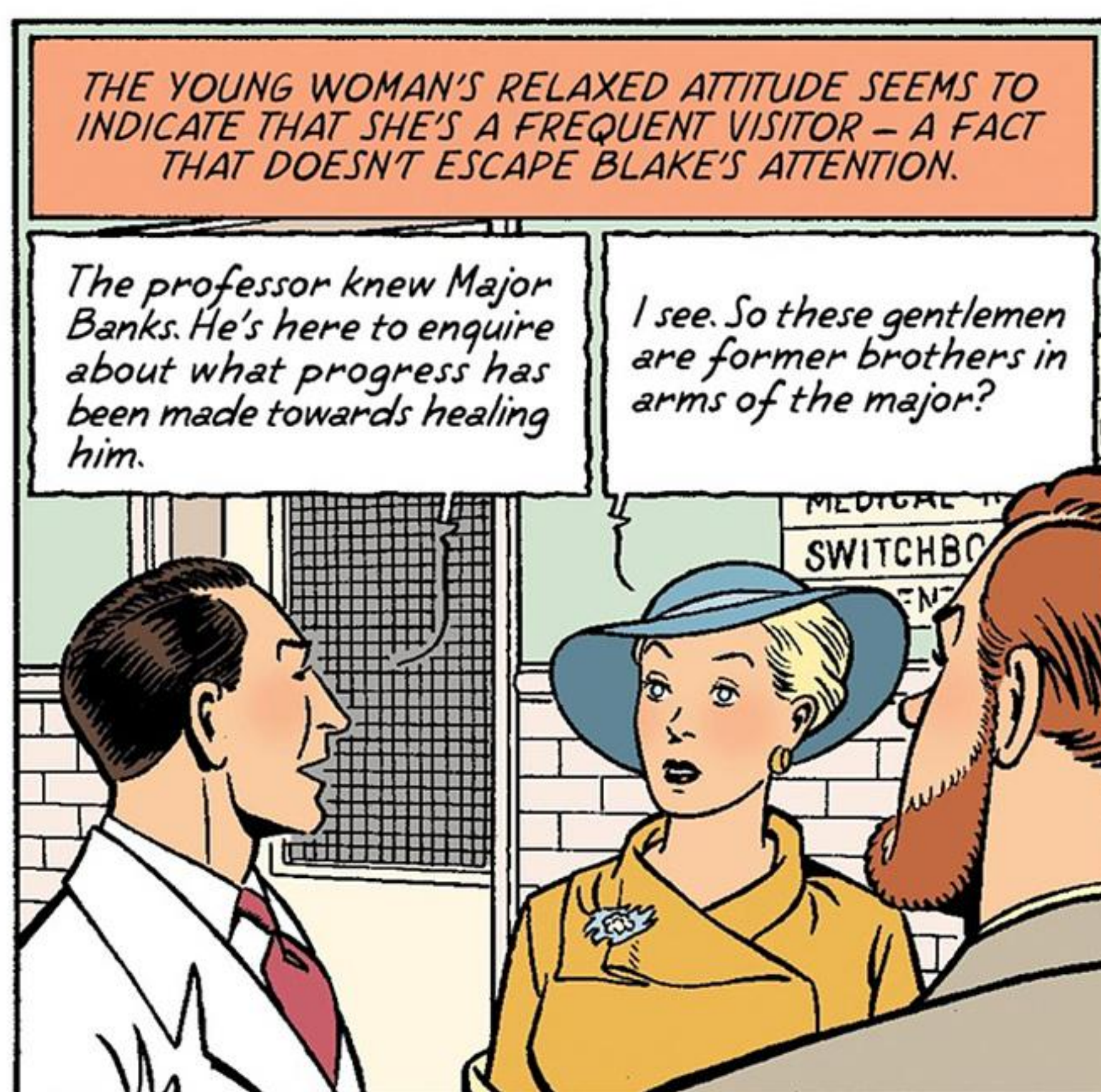
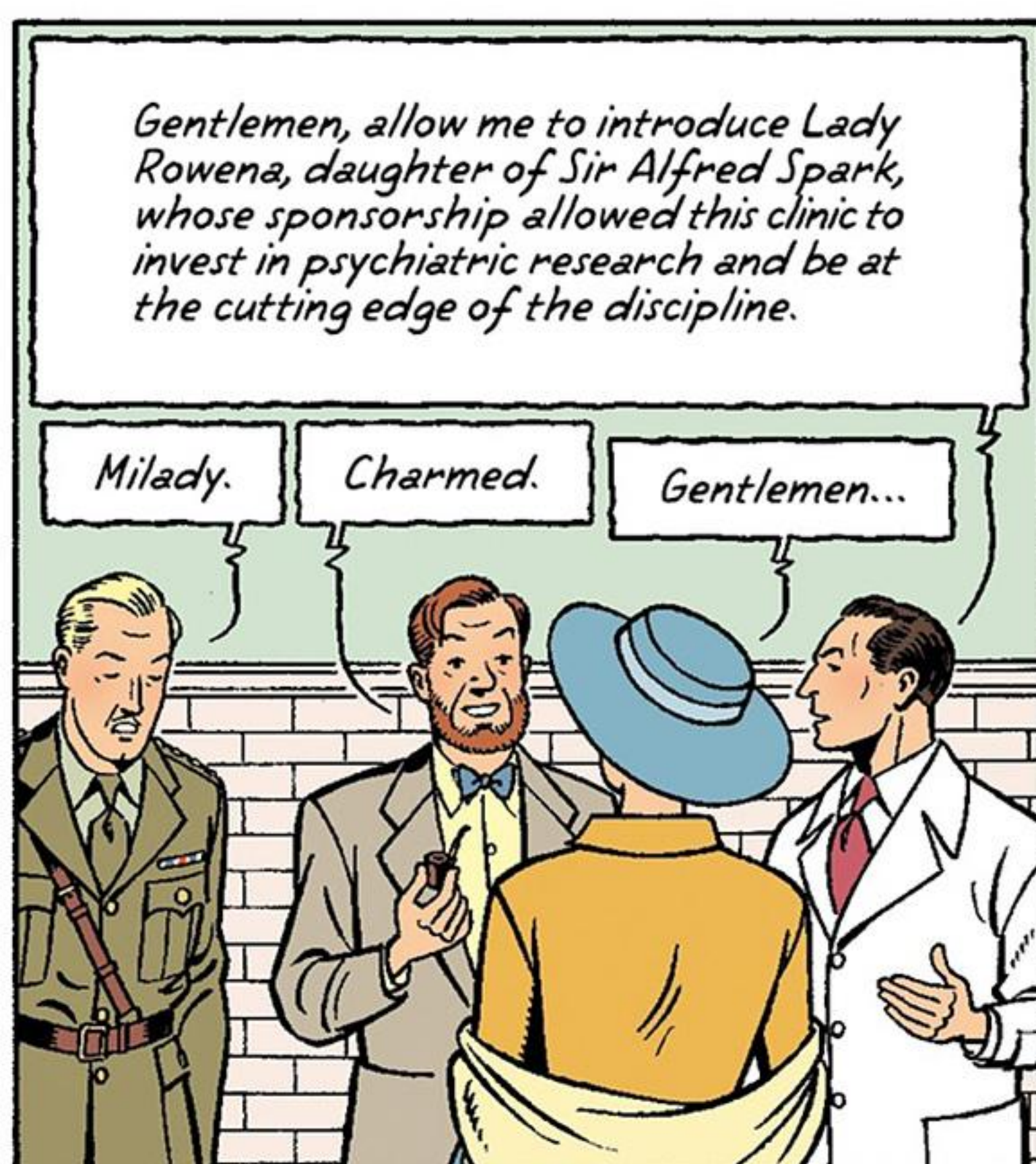
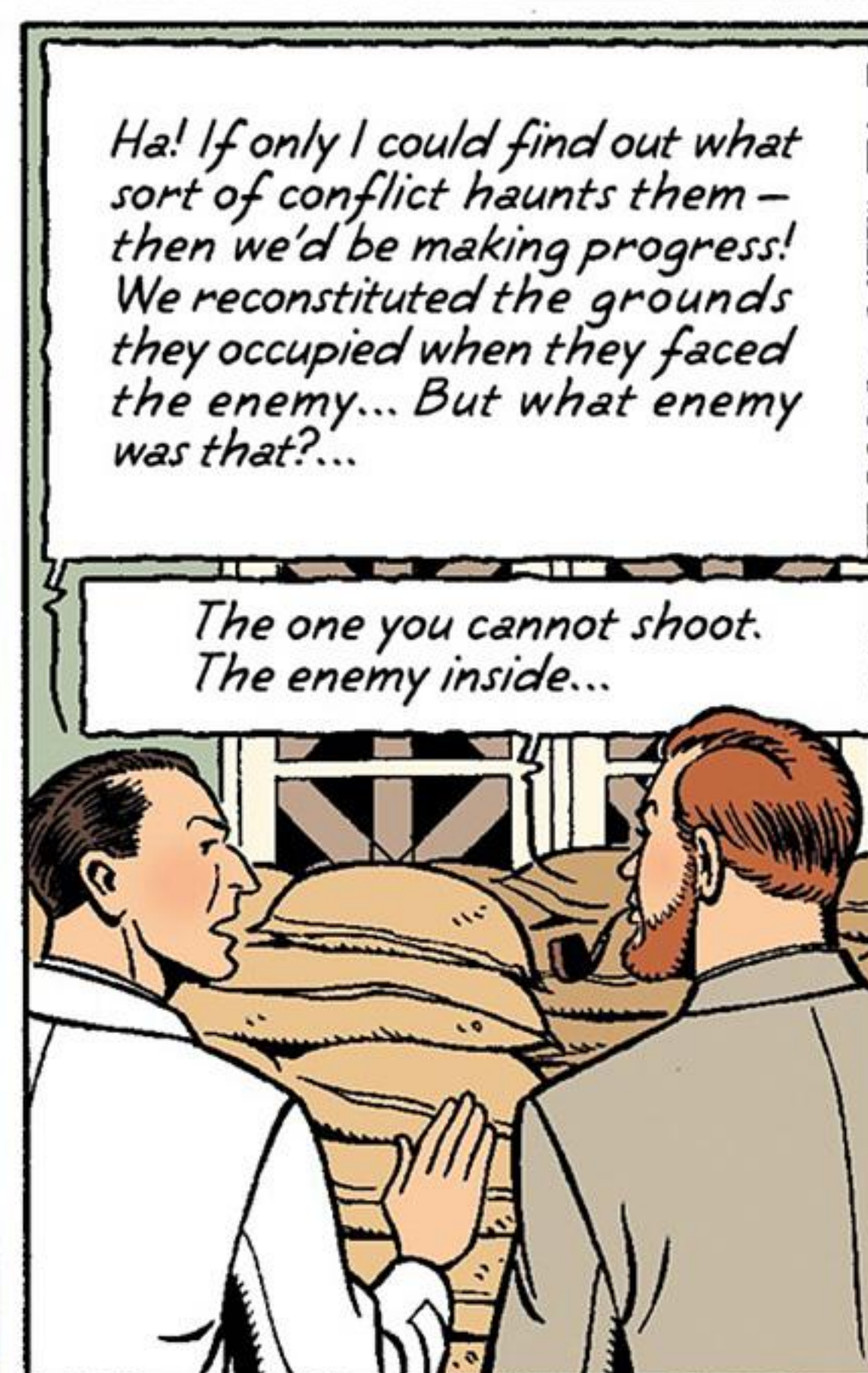
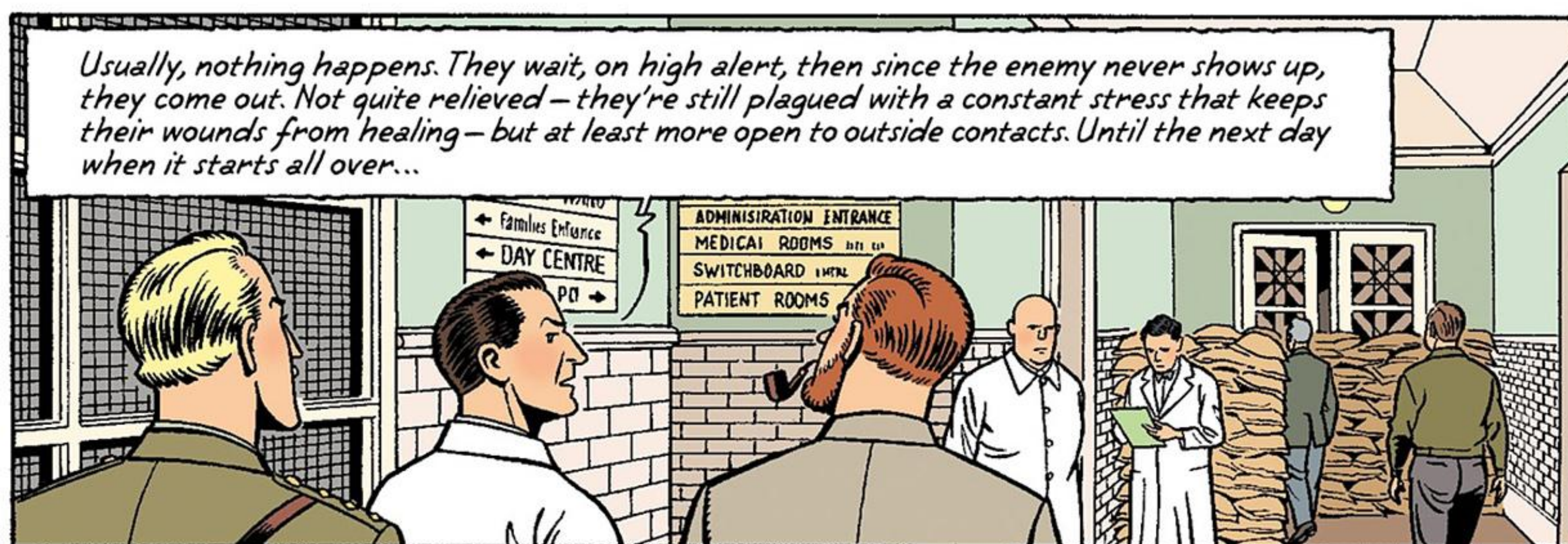
What does that staging consist of in Major Banks's case?

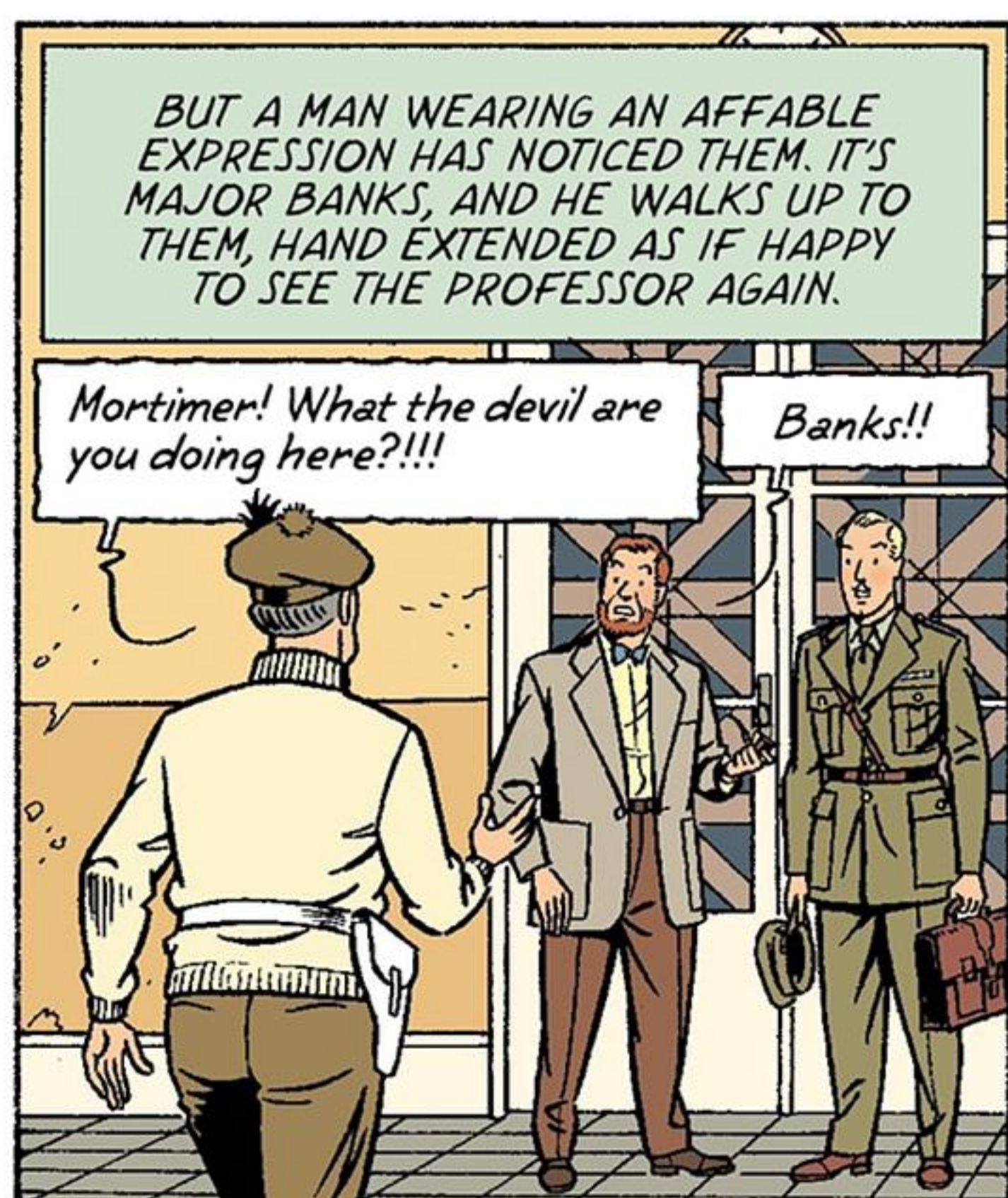
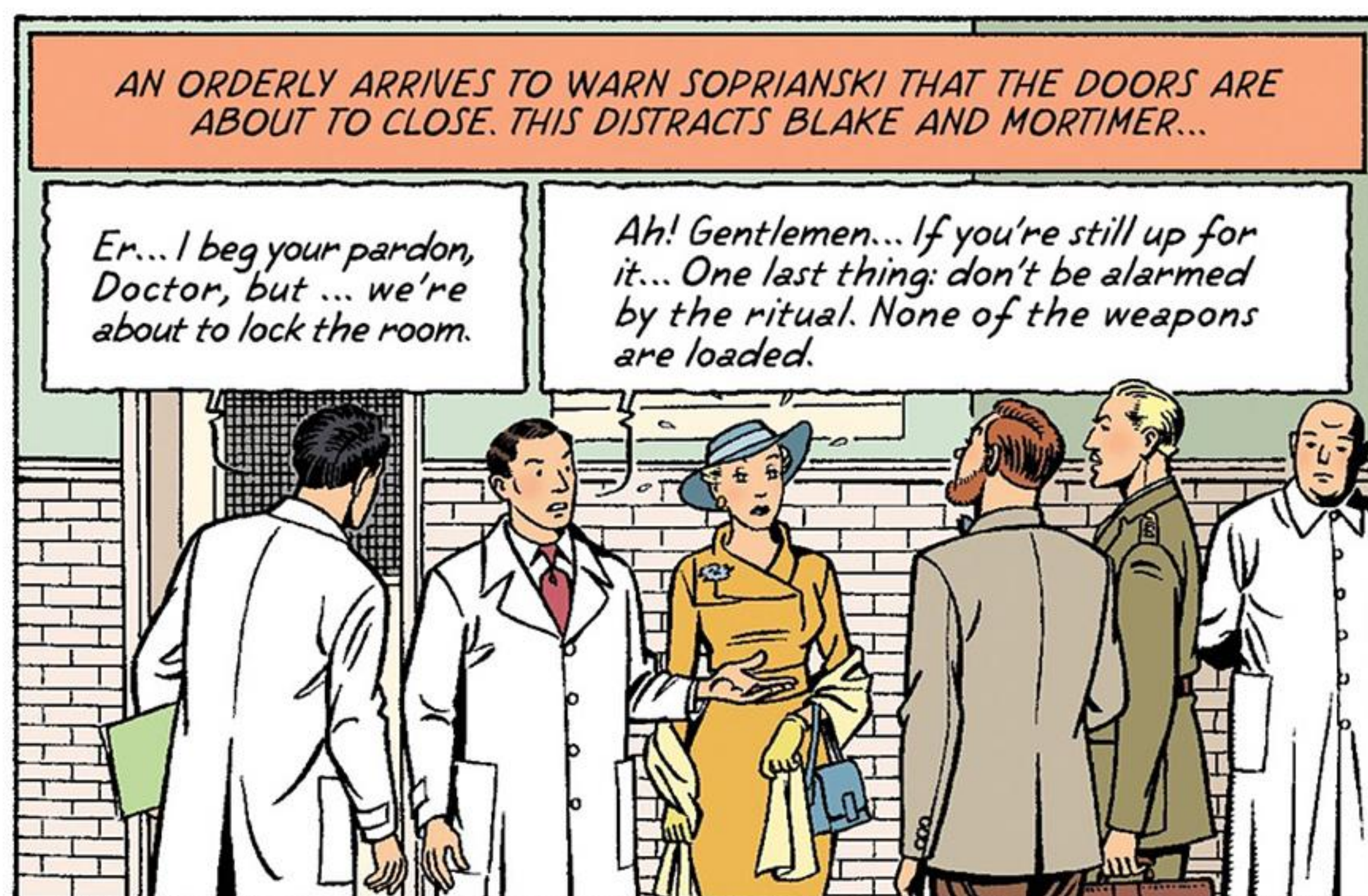
It's rather spectacular. It usually happens around noon. If you're interested, we can join the group now. This is when they dig in.

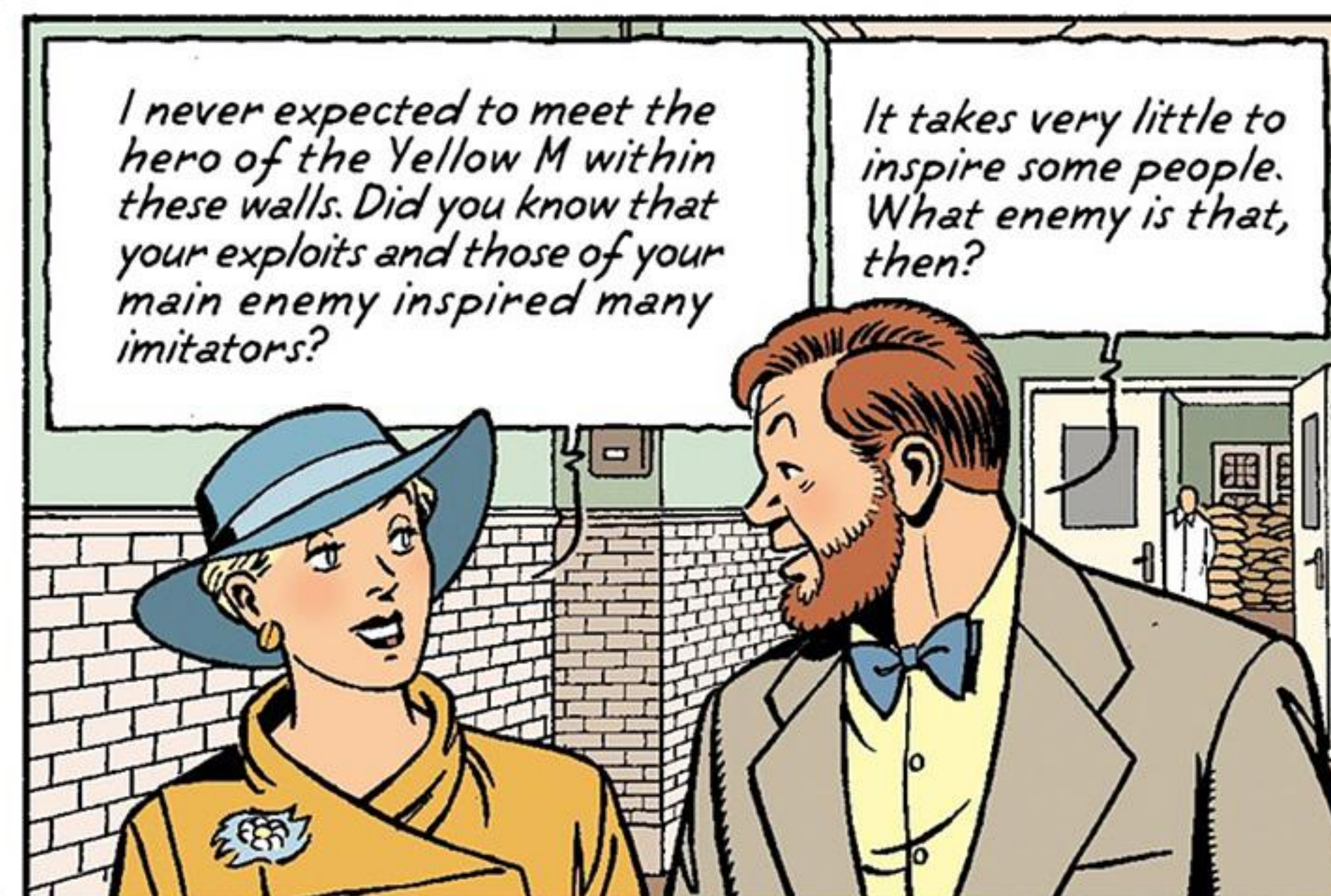
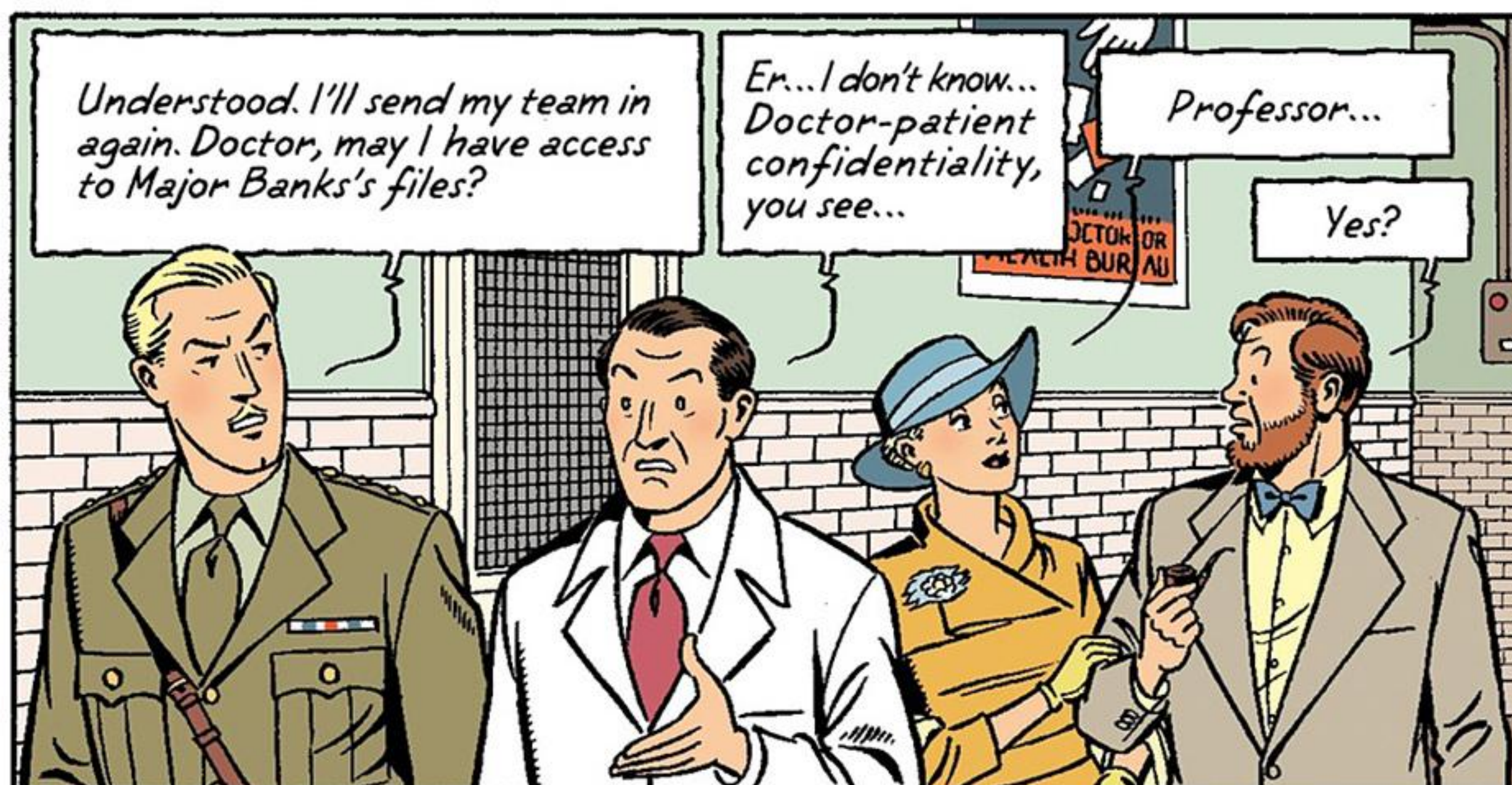
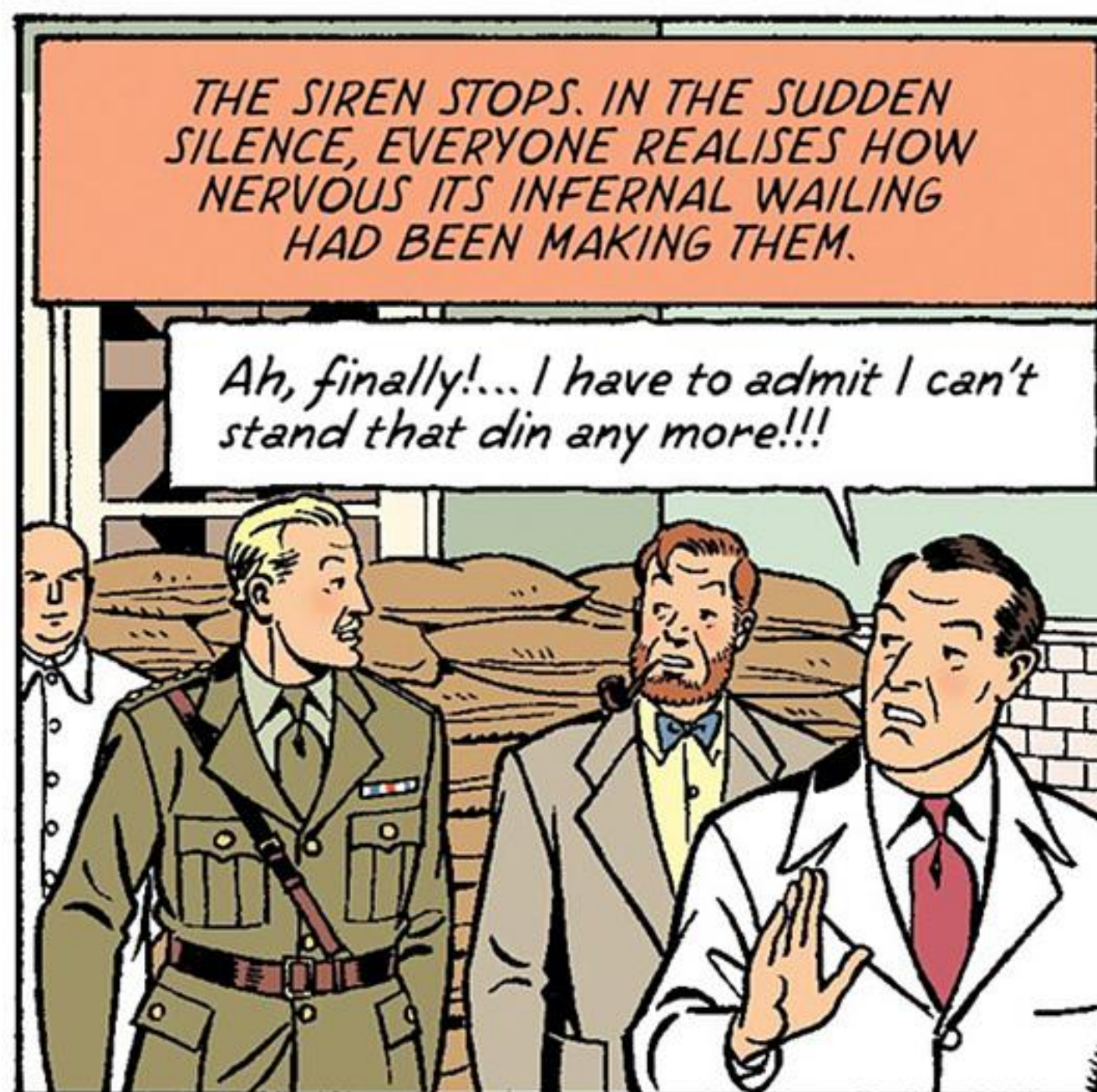


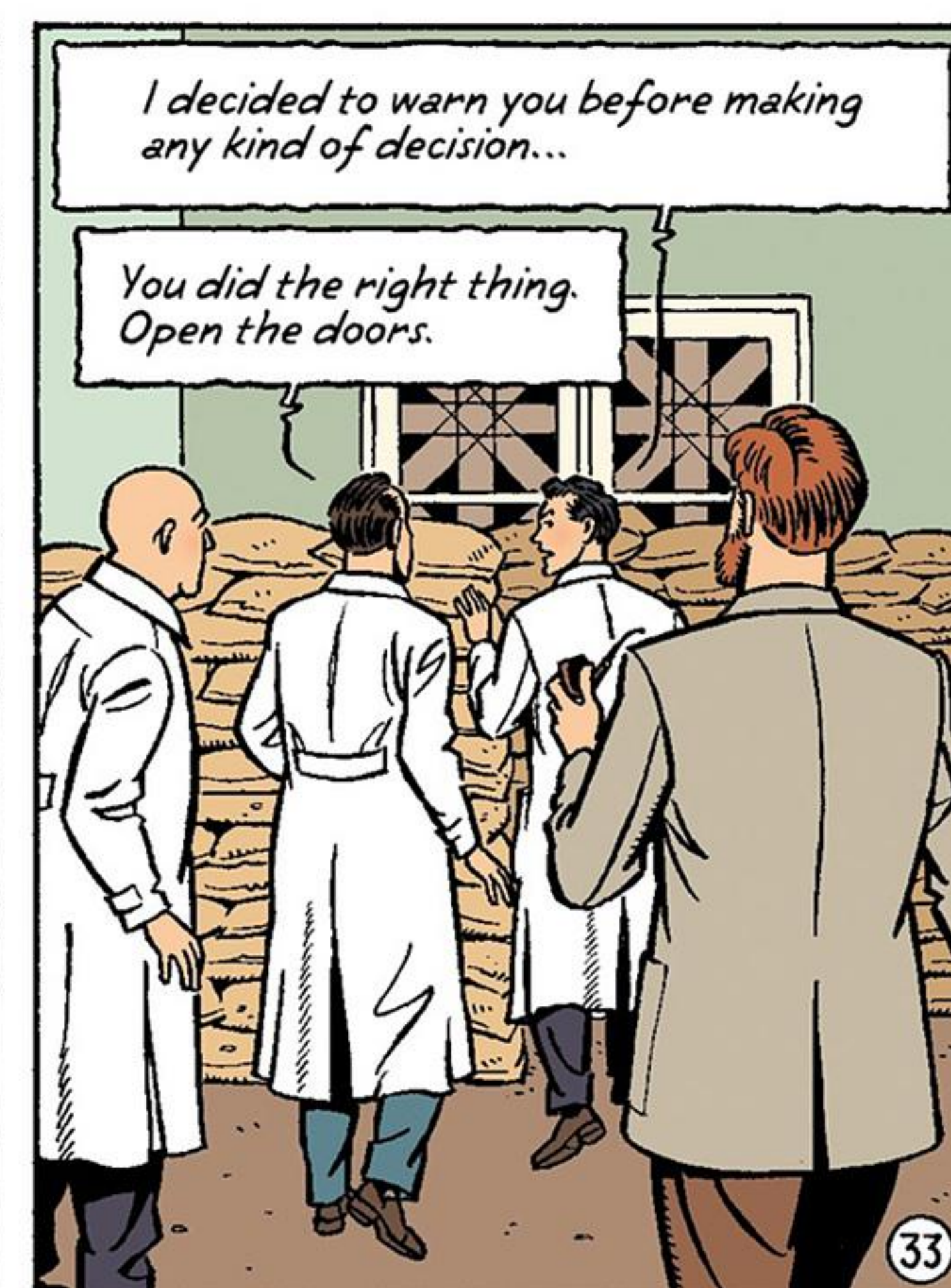
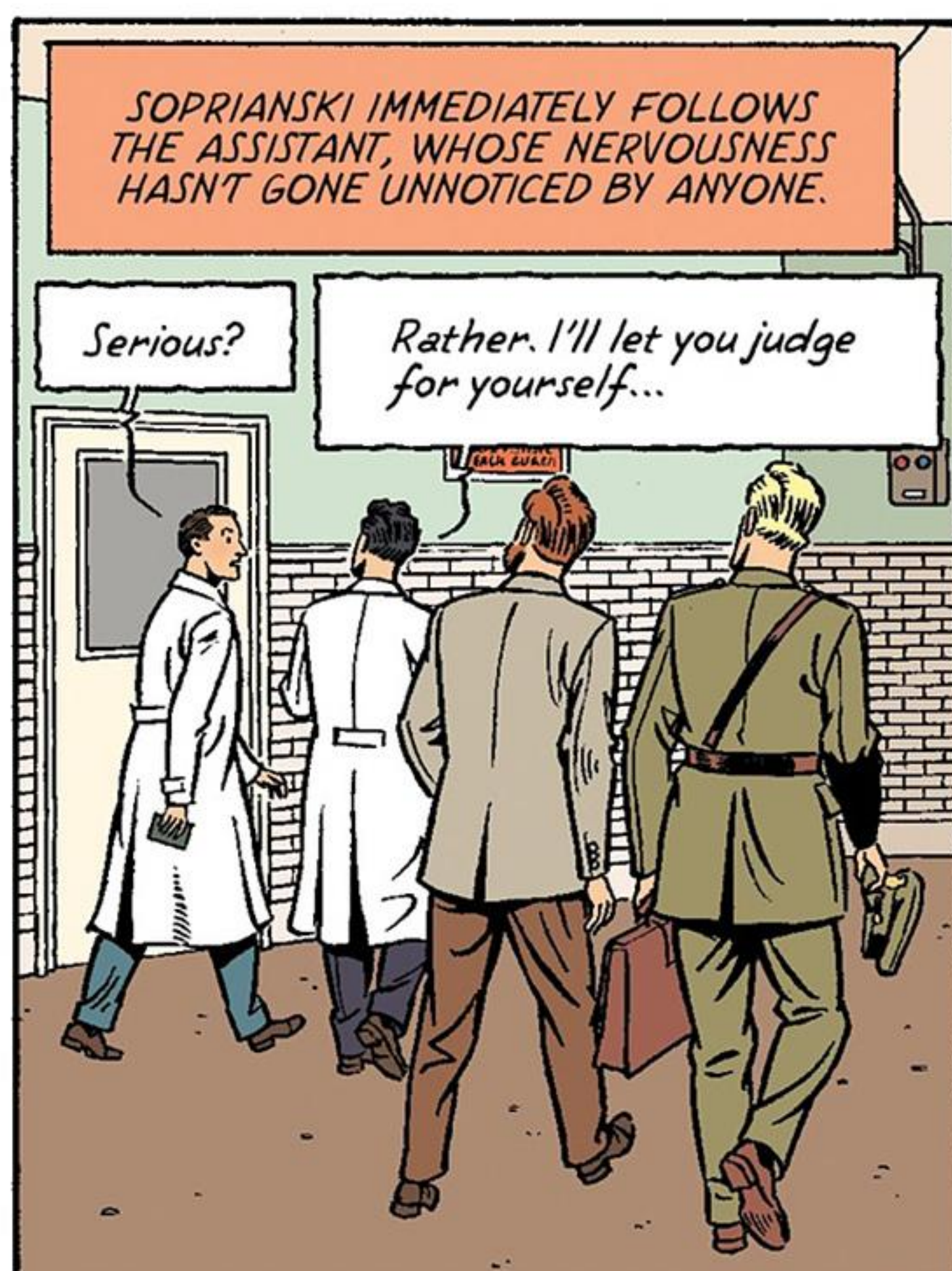
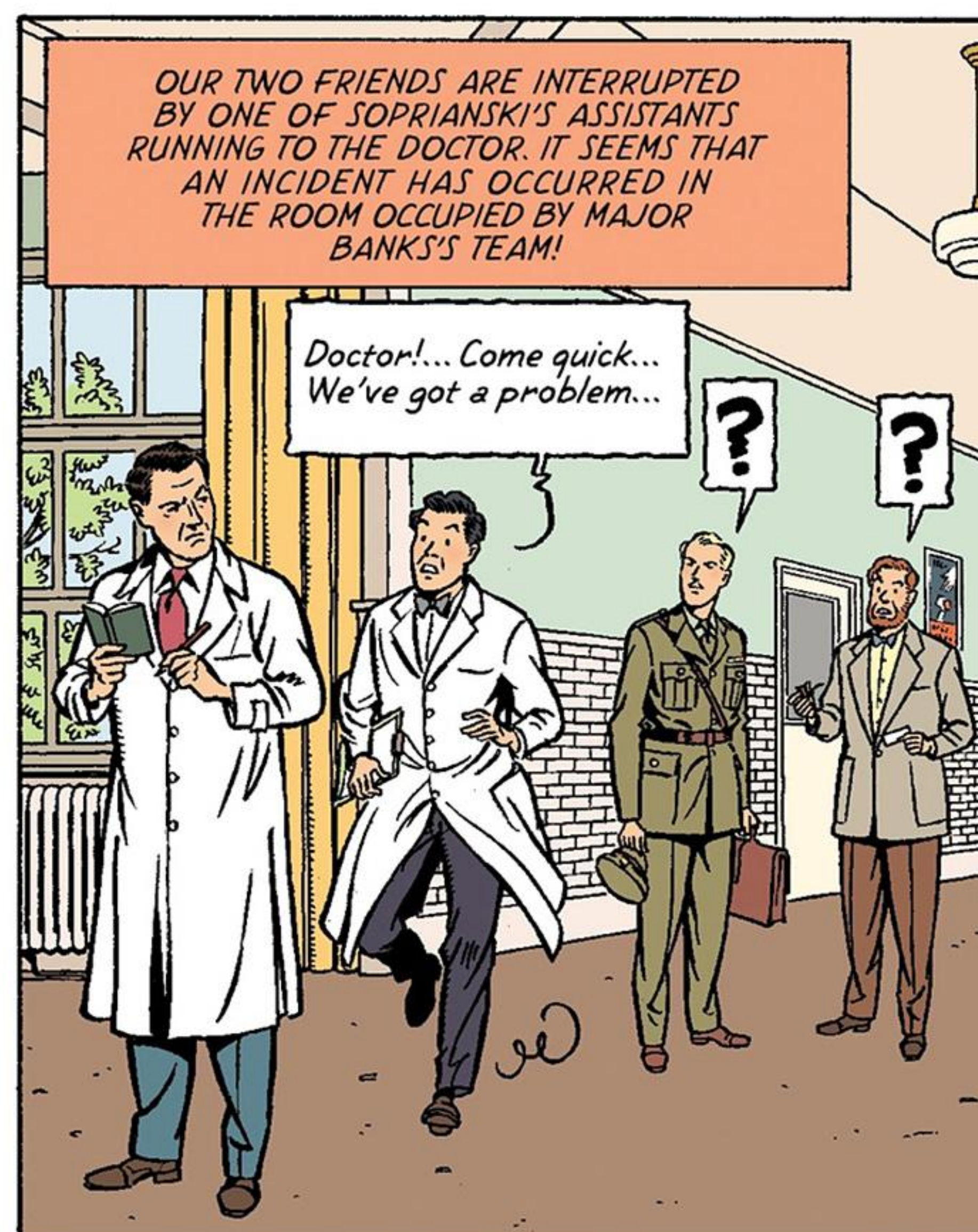
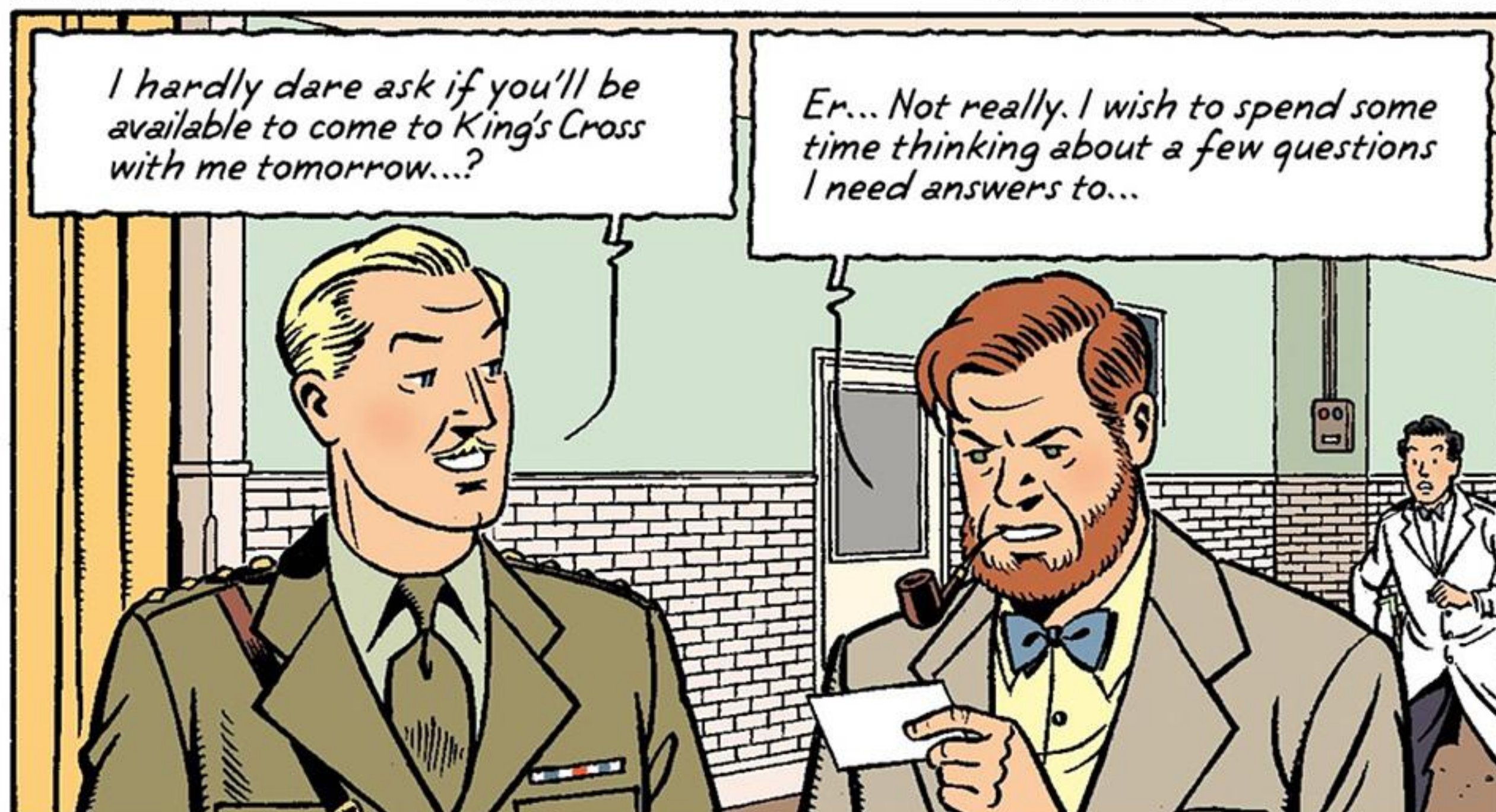
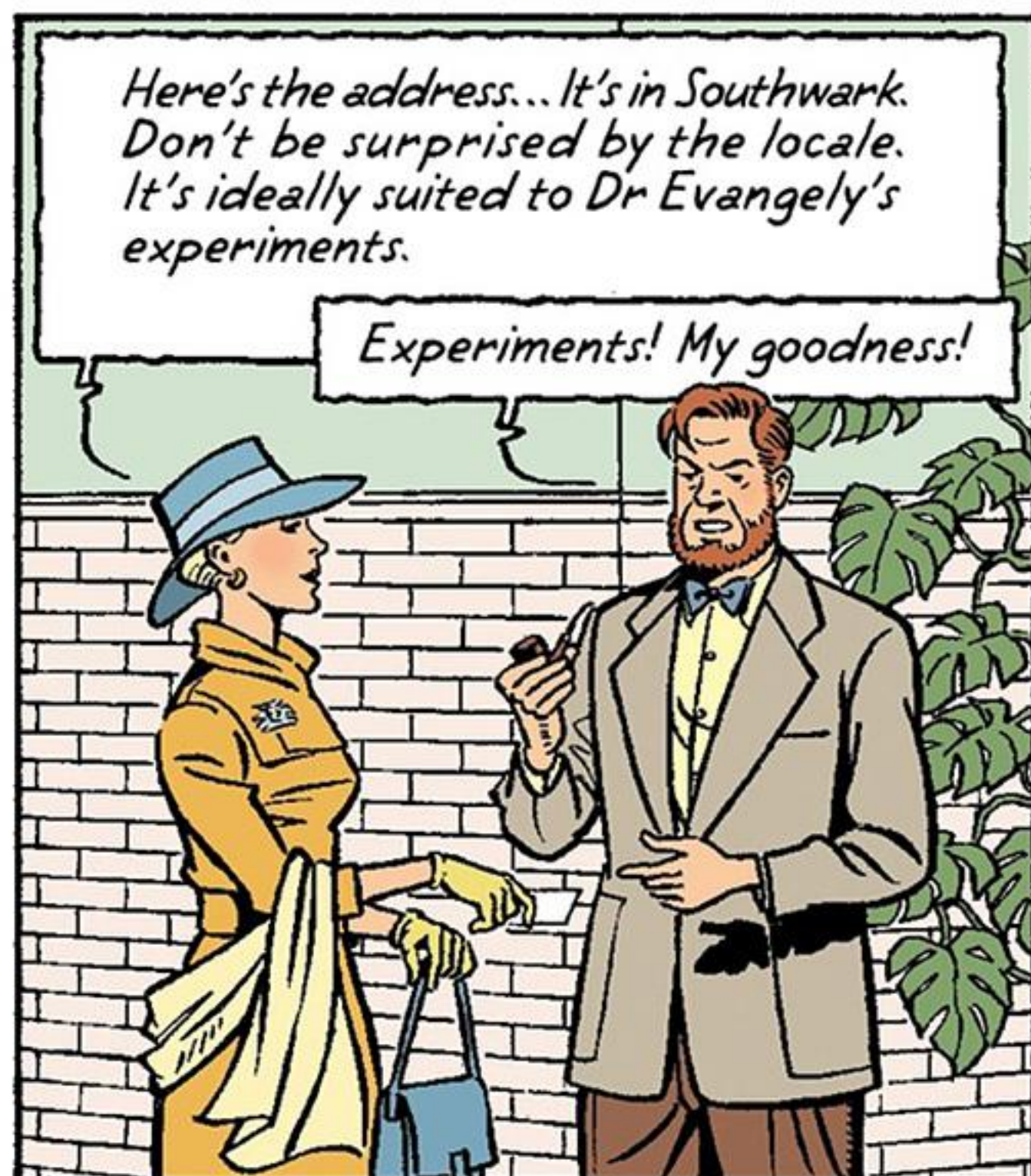
'Dig in'??!

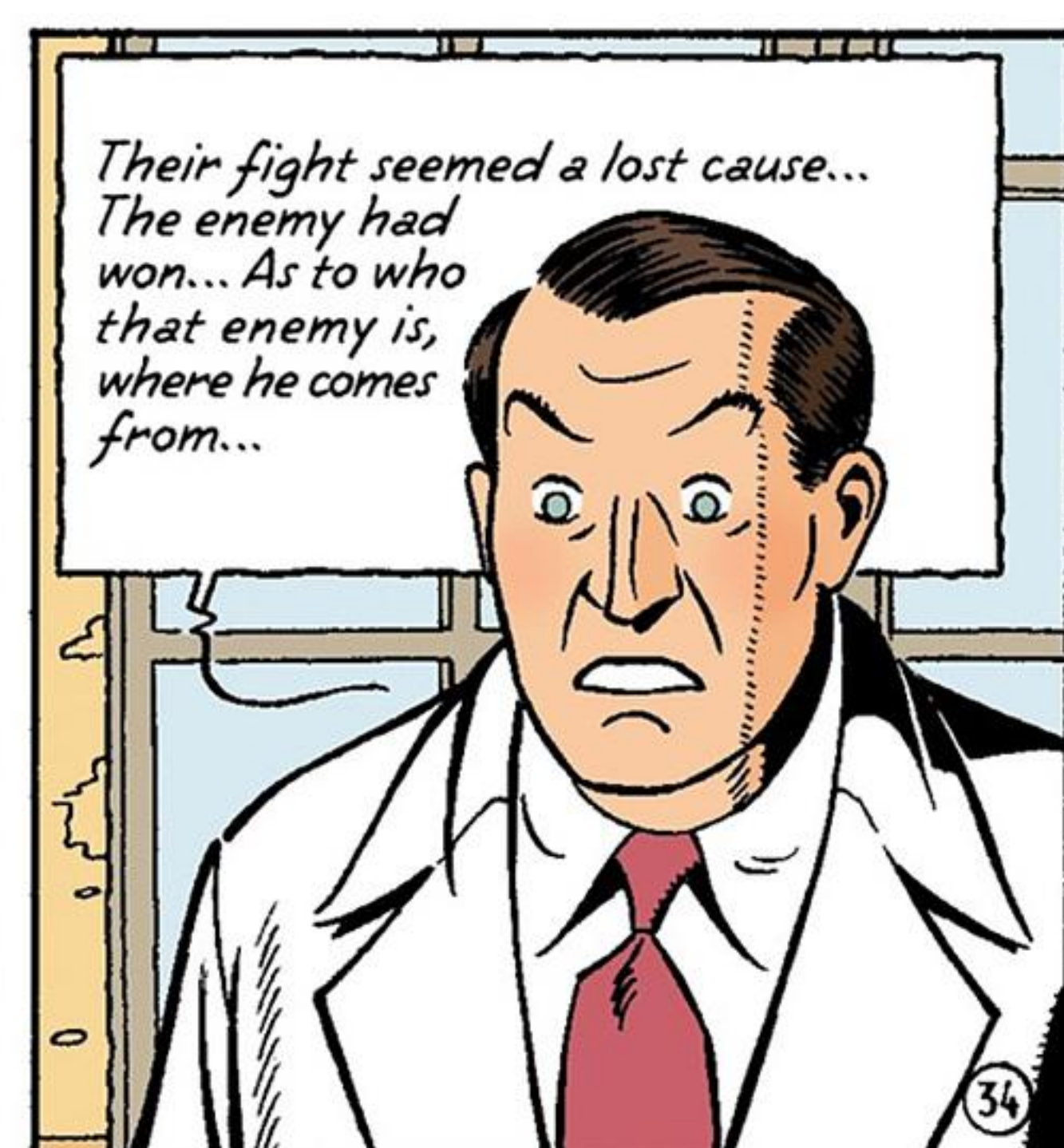
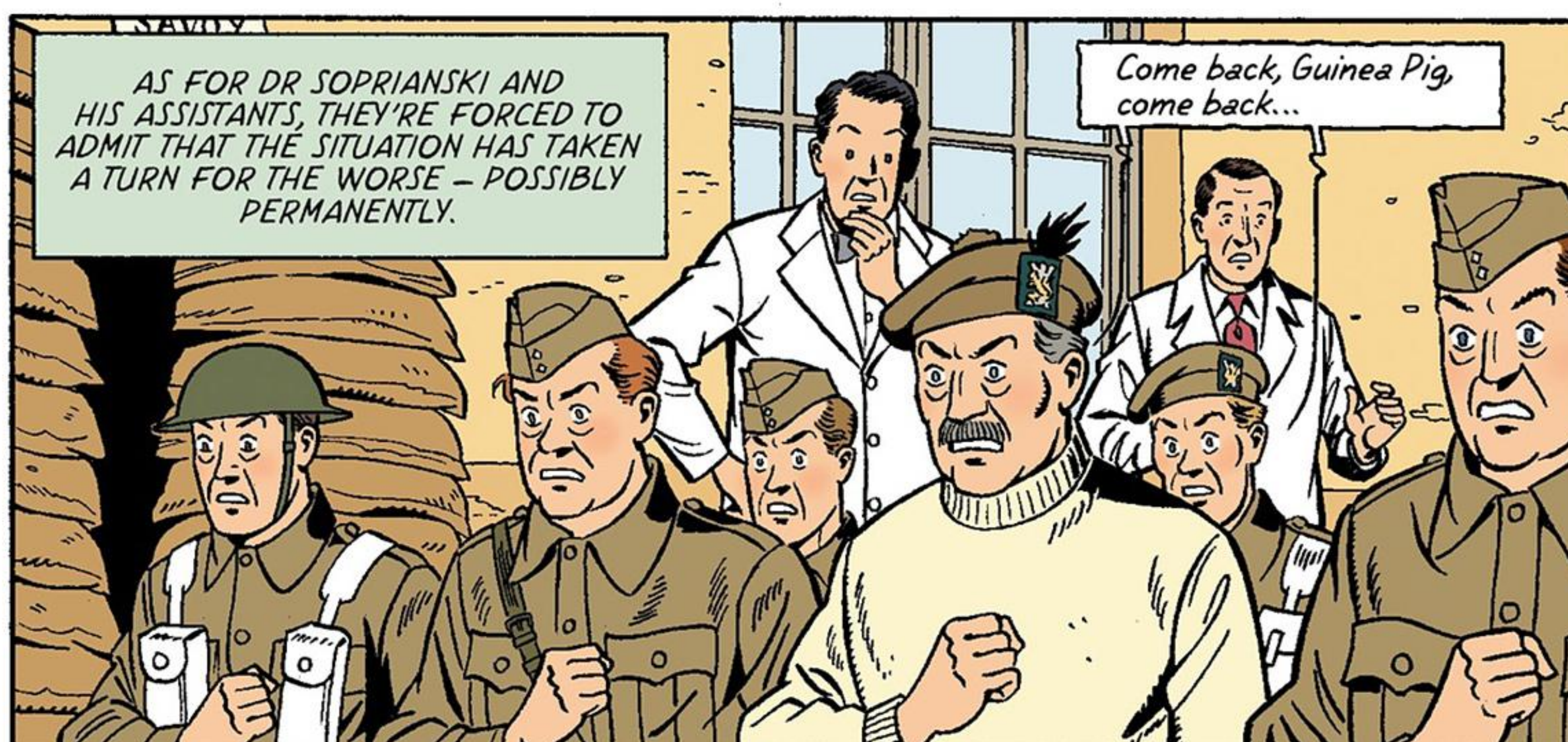
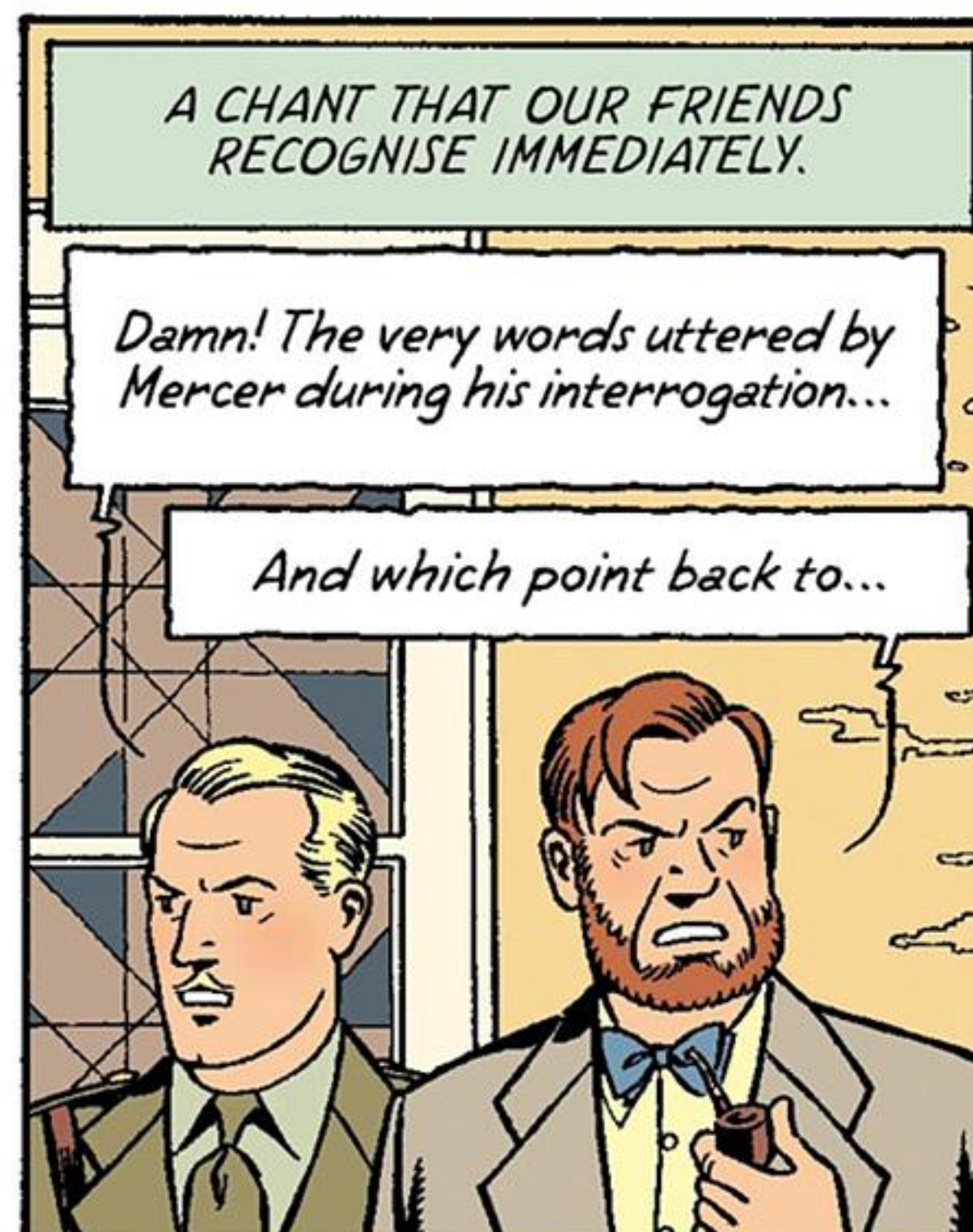
Yes. Come and see...



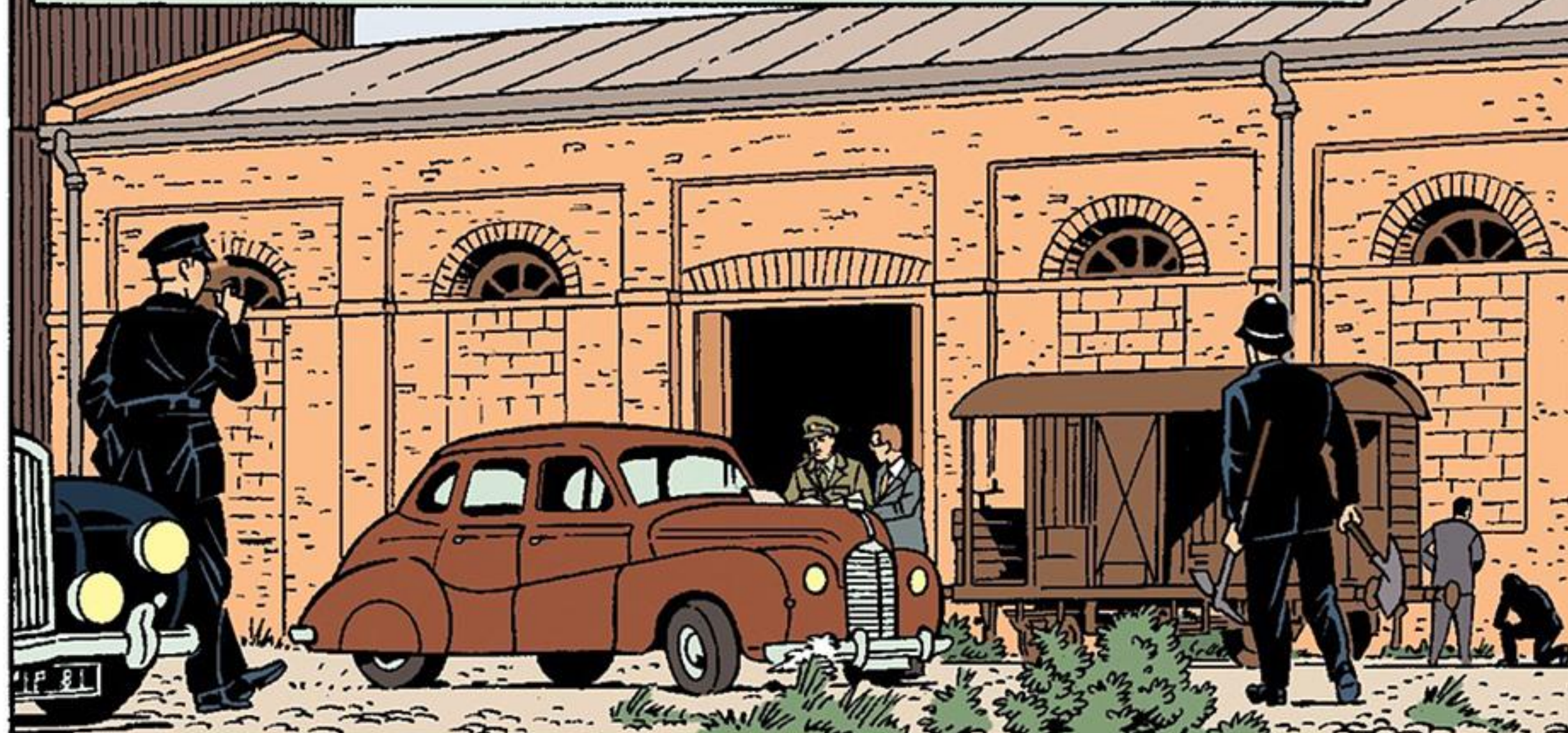








THE NEXT MORNING AT DAWN, CAPTAIN BLAKE'S AGENTS RESUME THEIR SEARCH OF WAREHOUSE 45, LOCATED AMONG THE ABANDONED LOTS OF KING'S CROSS.



AFTER LONG HOURS OF PROBING, A NEW ELEMENT SURFACES AT LAST, BRINGING HOPE TO THE TEAM.

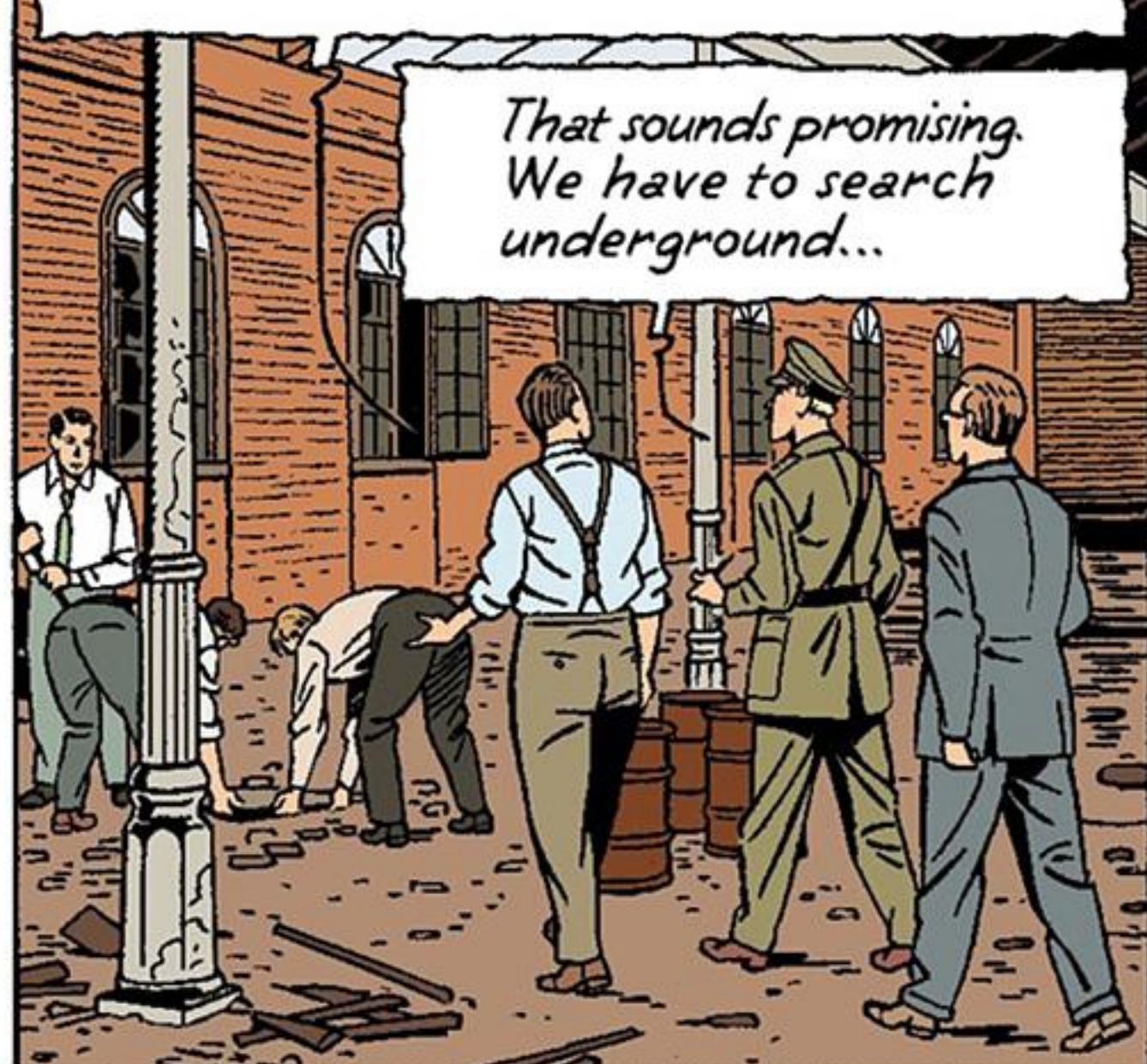
Sir... We found something interesting.

Ah! I was beginning to despair!



First we pushed aside the barrels that filled part of the warehouse. Then we sandblasted the ground and, under the bricks, we found a grate. We're working it loose as we speak...

That sounds promising. We have to search underground...



Phewww!... It weighs a ton!

Millovich, your torch.



BEFORE THE GROUP OPENS A DEEP WELL WITH A LADDER AFFIXED TO ONE WALL. THE LIGHT OF THE TORCH DOESN'T REACH THE BOTTOM.



Gentlemen, we found what Major Banks was talking about. All that's left to do is go down...

Goodness! It looks deep!!!



Deep or not, we don't have much of a choice! Come on, Millovich...

I... Er... Coming, sir.



Er... Sir... I... I've got cramps!



Er... Easily, sir...



SO BEGINS A LONG DESCENT, SEEMINGLY ENDLESS TO POOR MILLOVICH.

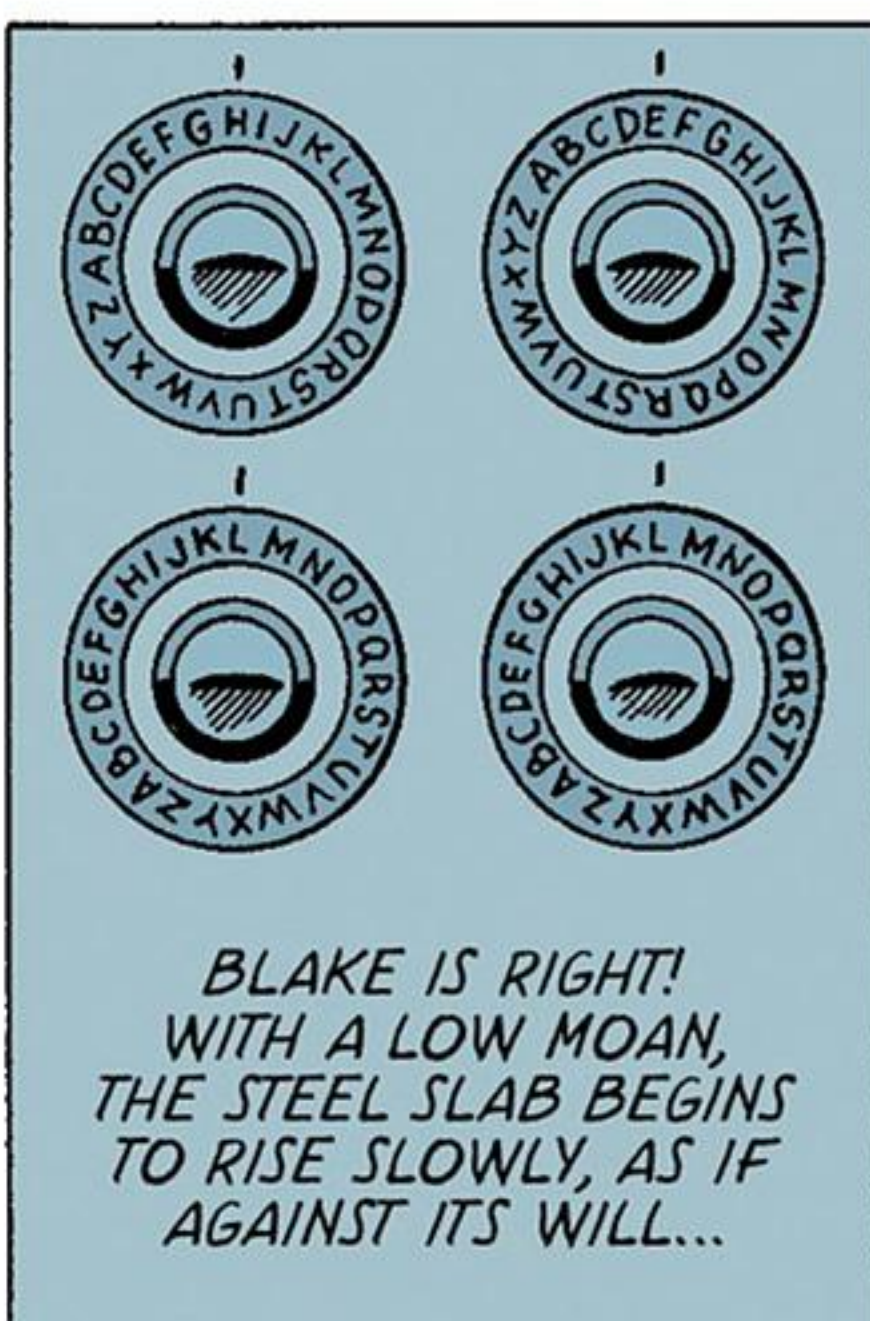


To the devil with your cramps, Millovich! Are the others following?

AT LAST, STEPPING OFF THE LAST RUNG, BLAKE CAN REASSURE HIS MEN.

It's fine! No threat in sight!

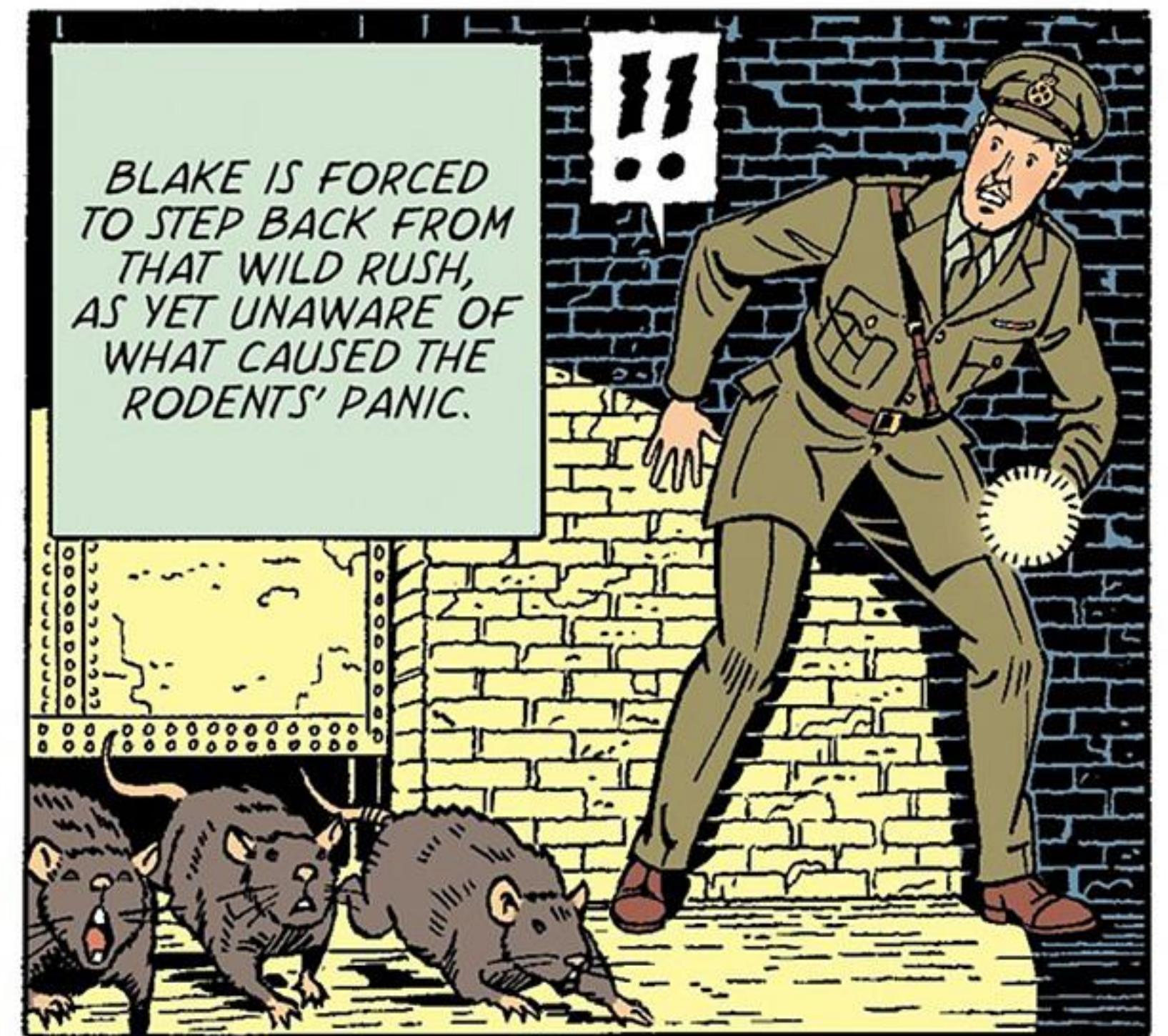






THE DISTRESSING SIGHT OF DOZENS OF BONE-THIN RATS STREAMING OUT OF THE NARROW OPENING FILLS THE LIGHT THROWN BY THE TORCHES.

Blimey!!!!



BLAKE IS FORCED TO STEP BACK FROM THAT WILD RUSH, AS YET UNAWARE OF WHAT CAUSED THE RODENTS' PANIC.

!!



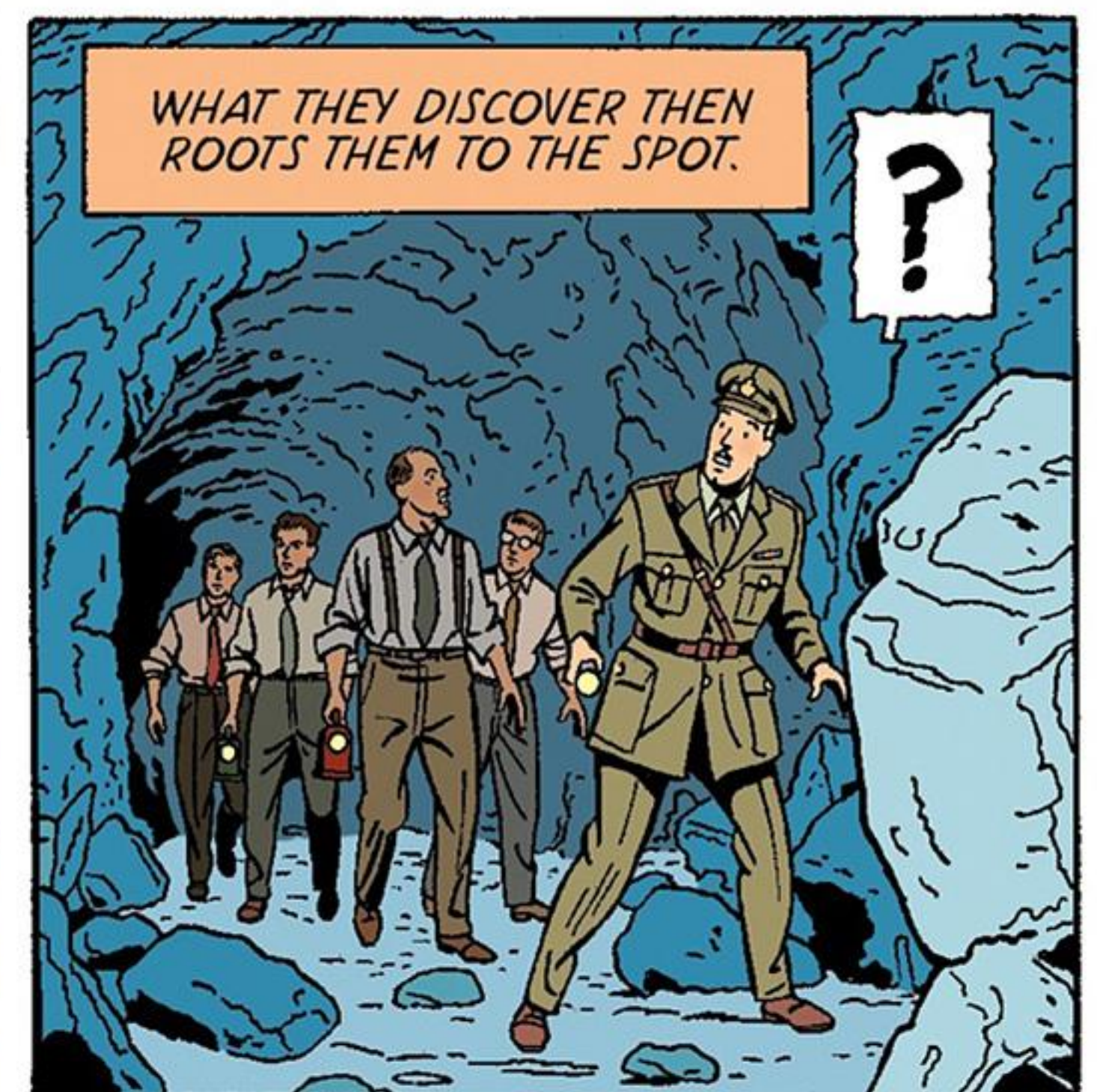
IN THE MEANTIME, THE HEAVY DOOR HAS LIFTED, ALLOWING THE PARTY TO TRAVEL ONWARDS.

There's a passage, sir.

I hope so!

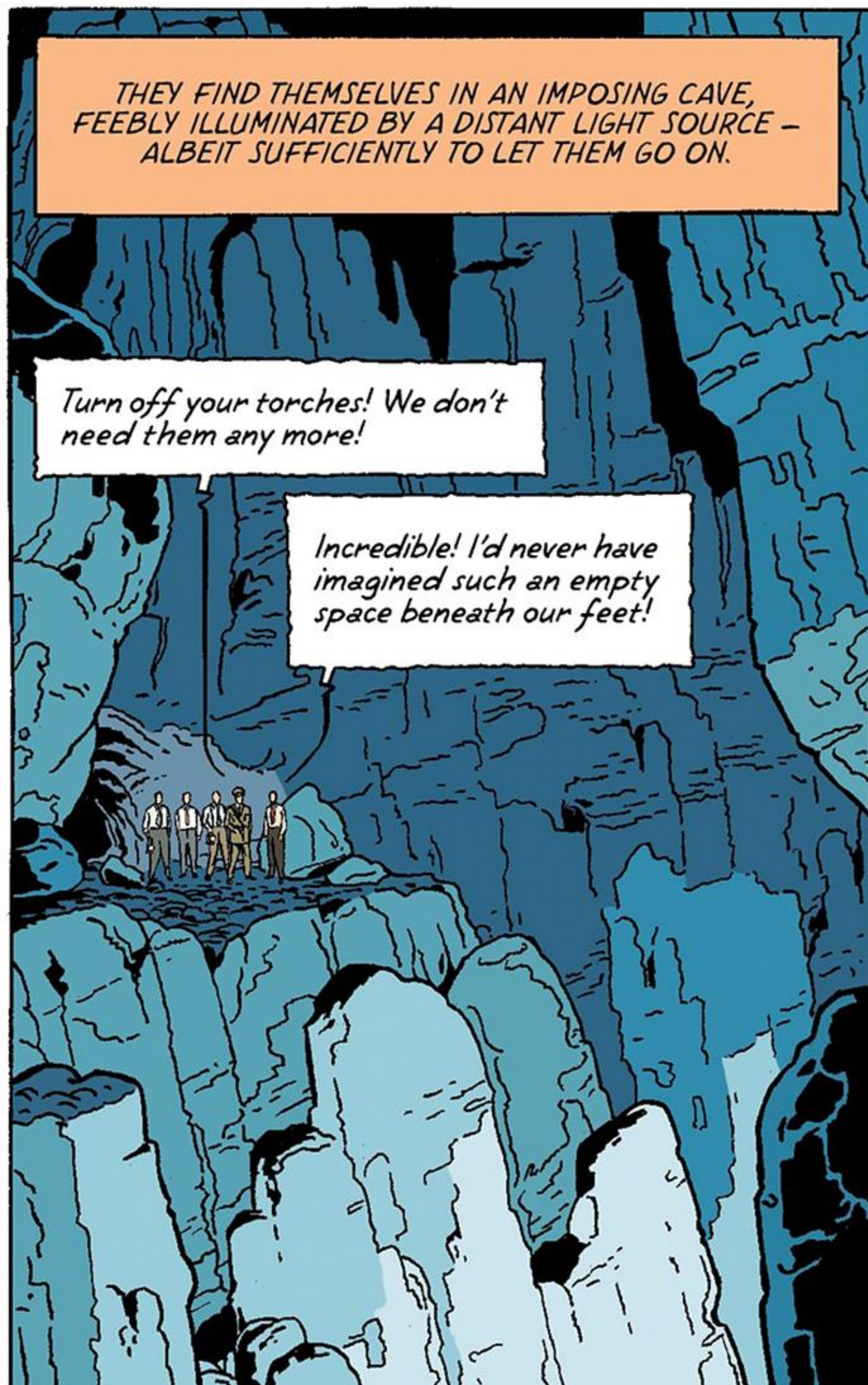


AND SO, ON THEY WALK, UNTIL THE TUNNEL APPEARS TO END AT A WIDER LOCATION.



WHAT THEY DISCOVER THEN ROOTS THEM TO THE SPOT.

?



THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN AN IMPOSING CAVE, FEEBLY ILLUMINATED BY A DISTANT LIGHT SOURCE – ALBEIT SUFFICIENTLY TO LET THEM GO ON.

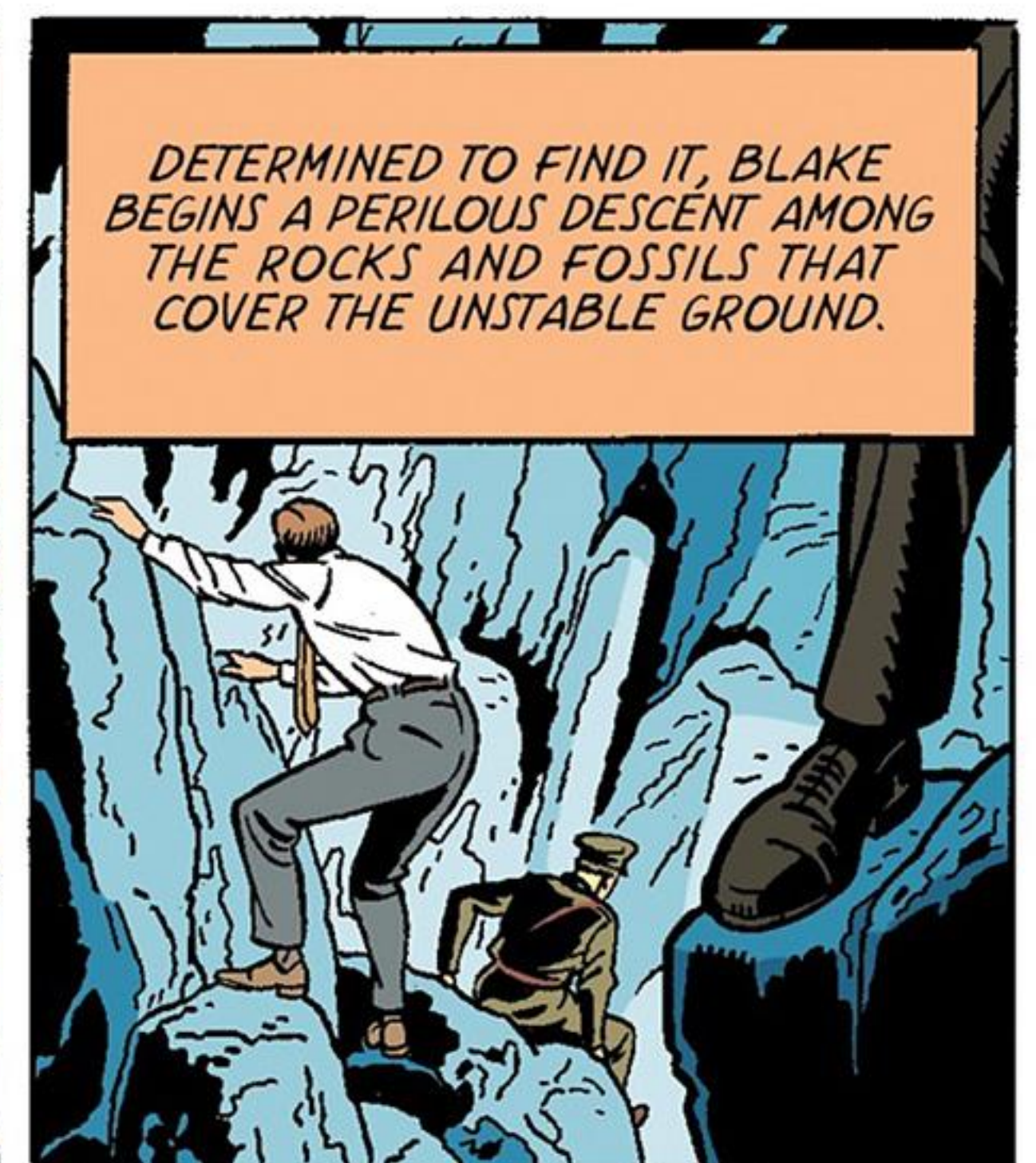
Turn off your torches! We don't need them any more!

Incredible! I'd never have imagined such an empty space beneath our feet!



D'you hear that?

Yes. Like a buzzing coming from further on.



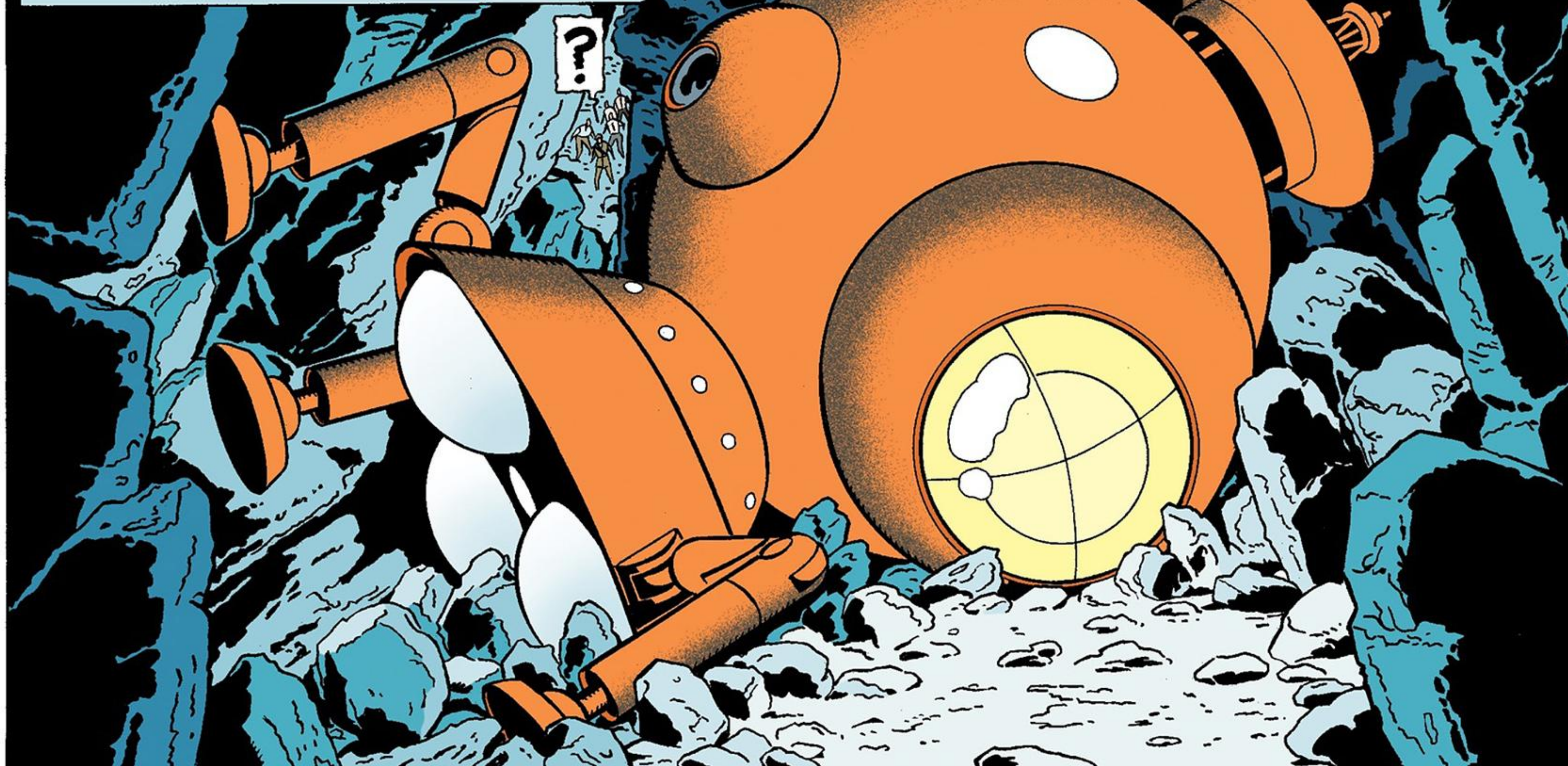
DETERMINED TO FIND IT, BLAKE BEGINS A PERILOUS DESCENT AMONG THE ROCKS AND FOSSILS THAT COVER THE UNSTABLE GROUND.



BUT AFTER WHAT SEEMS LIKE A VERY LONG TIME TO THEM, THEY'RE FORCED TO STOP AGAIN.

37

APPEARING BEFORE THE SMALL GROUP IS THE ENORMOUS MASS OF A MACHINE THAT DEFIES ALL TERRESTRIAL CLASSIFICATION. IT LOOKS SOMEWHAT LIKE A SPACESHIP LYING ON ITS SIDE, WITH ITS FEET, ITS LANDING PADS, SLOWLY SWINGING BACK AND FORTH.



BRAVELY – OR PERHAPS RECKLESSLY – BLAKE AND HIS MEN PRESS ON TOWARDS IT.



Pinch me, Millovich! I'd thought of many possibilities, but this one never came to mind.

I... I'm afraid we may need to call for reinforcements.



Reinforcements!... This thing seems abandoned!



An opening!... How very tempting!



I'm going in! Stay outside until I tell you to join me...



NO SOONER HAS BLAKE STEPPED INSIDE THE BIZARRE CRAFT THAN THE STRANGE BUZZING SOUND RETURNS...



ALTHOUGH UNABLE TO HIDE A QUITE UNDERSTANDABLE APPREHENSION, OUR FRIEND NONETHELESS FORGES ON...



...NOT SUSPECTING WHAT AWAITS HIM, THE RATHER BAFFLING VIEW...

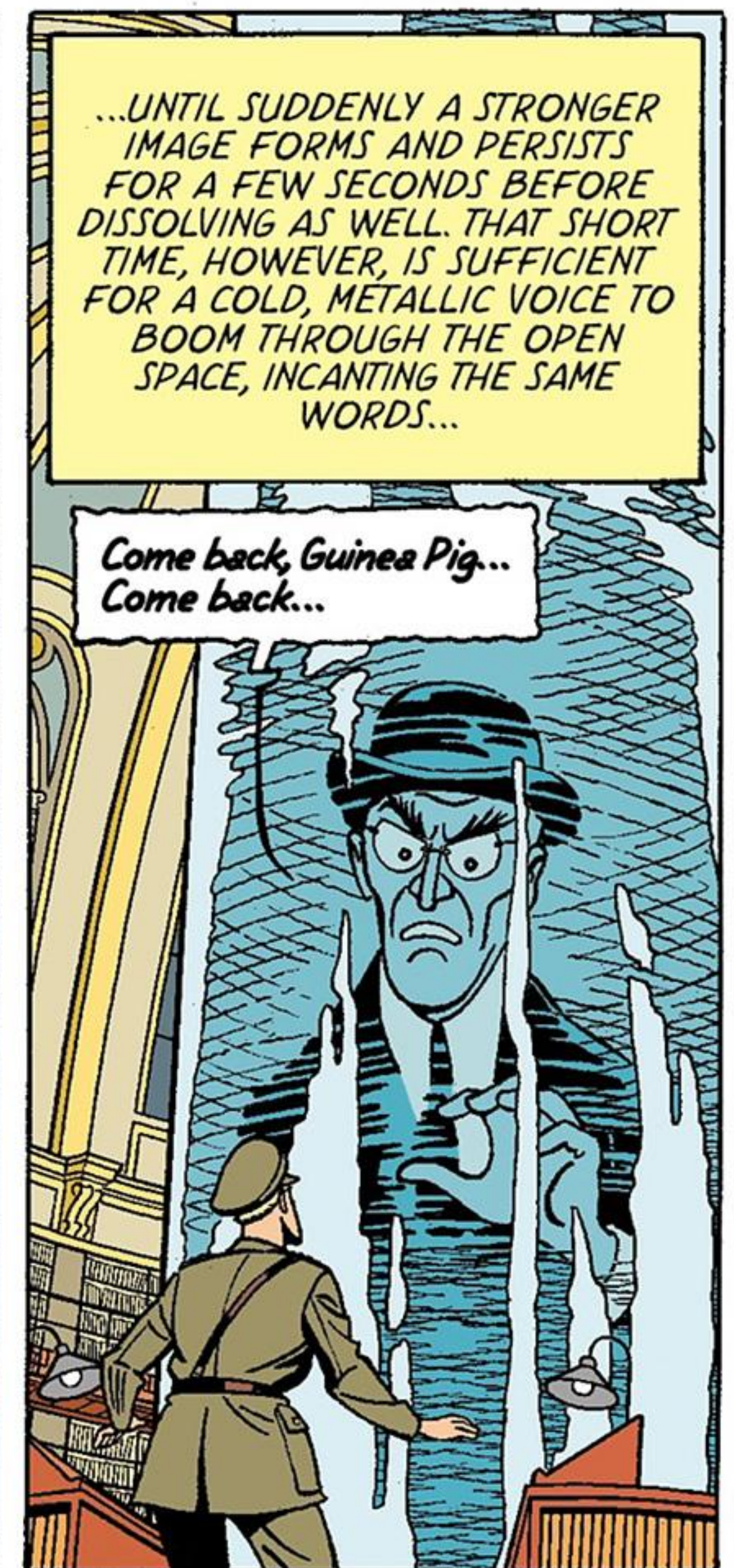




...OF AN INSIDE SPACE SEEMINGLY LIFTED WHOLE FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM!



WITH THE EXCEPTION, HOWEVER, OF A CENTRAL COLUMN RISING SEVERAL YARDS INTO THE AIR. ON THE SURFACE OF THE COLUMN, A COATING OF LIQUID CRYSTALS CONSTANTLY COME TOGETHER, THEN DISPERSE...

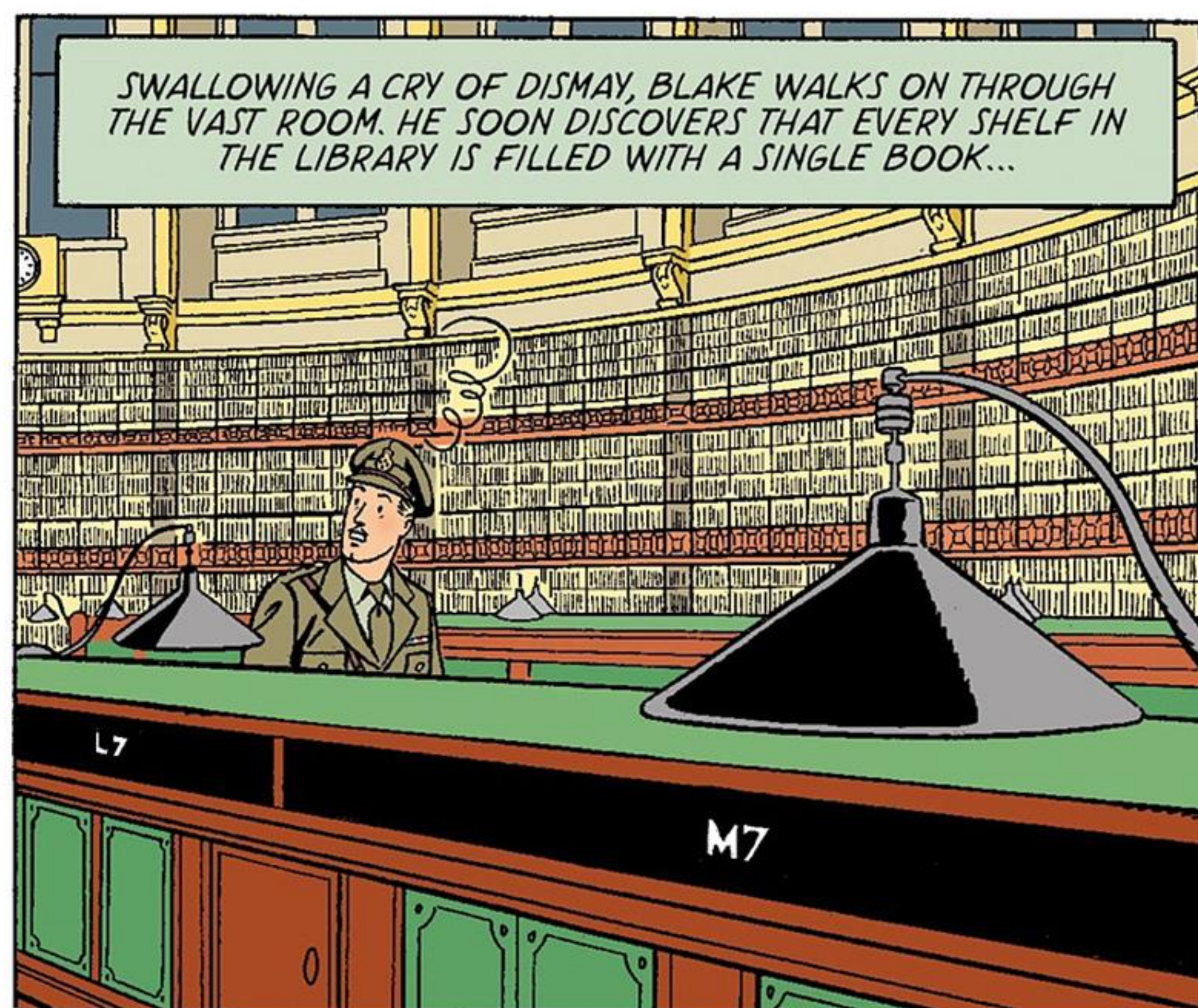


...UNTIL SUDDENLY A STRONGER IMAGE FORMS AND PERSISTS FOR A FEW SECONDS BEFORE DISSOLVING AS WELL. THAT SHORT TIME, HOWEVER, IS SUFFICIENT FOR A COLD, METALLIC VOICE TO BOOM THROUGH THE OPEN SPACE, INCANTING THE SAME WORDS...

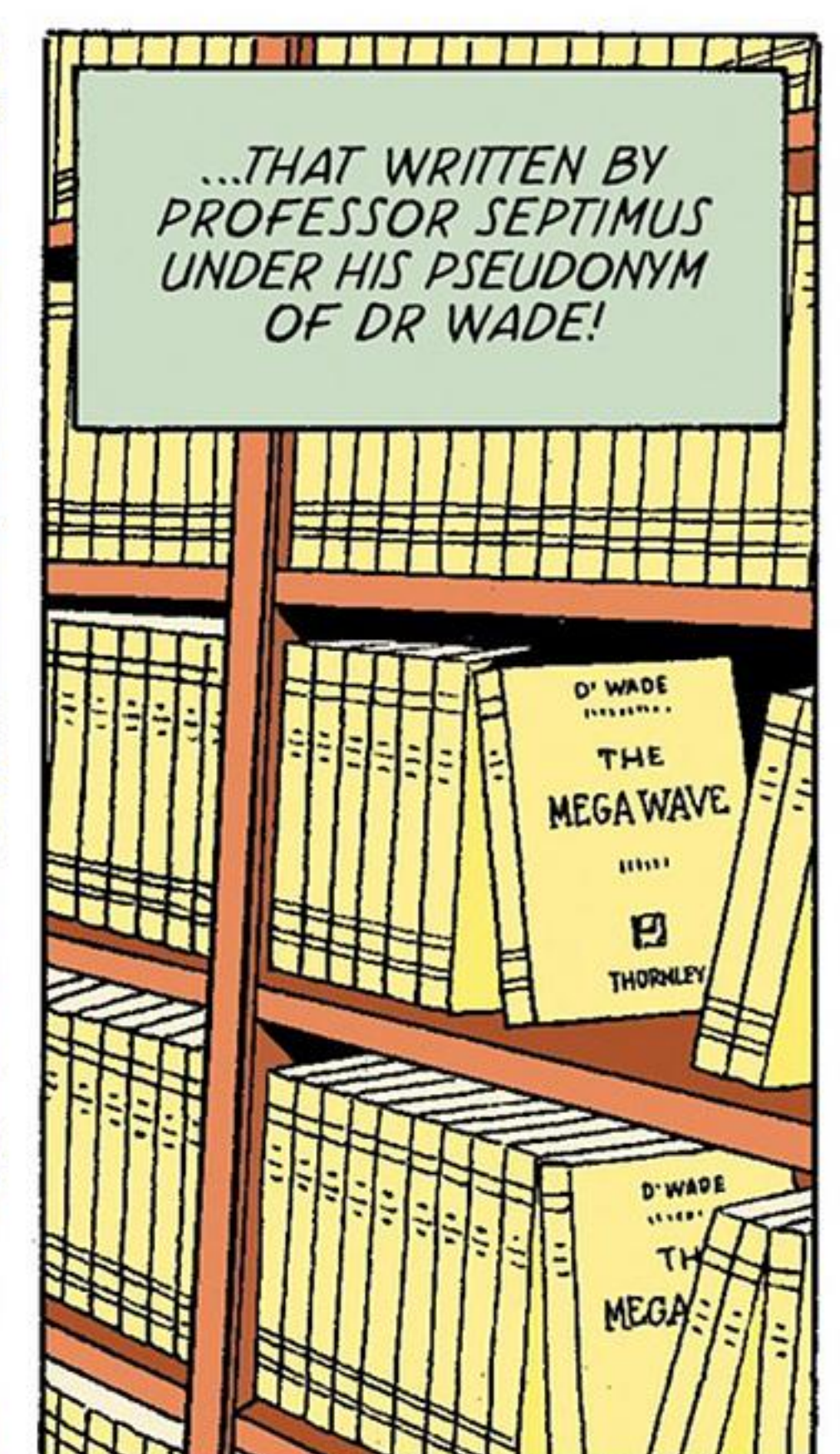
Come back, Guinea Pig...
Come back...



Ggggggiii...
neeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee... Pig...



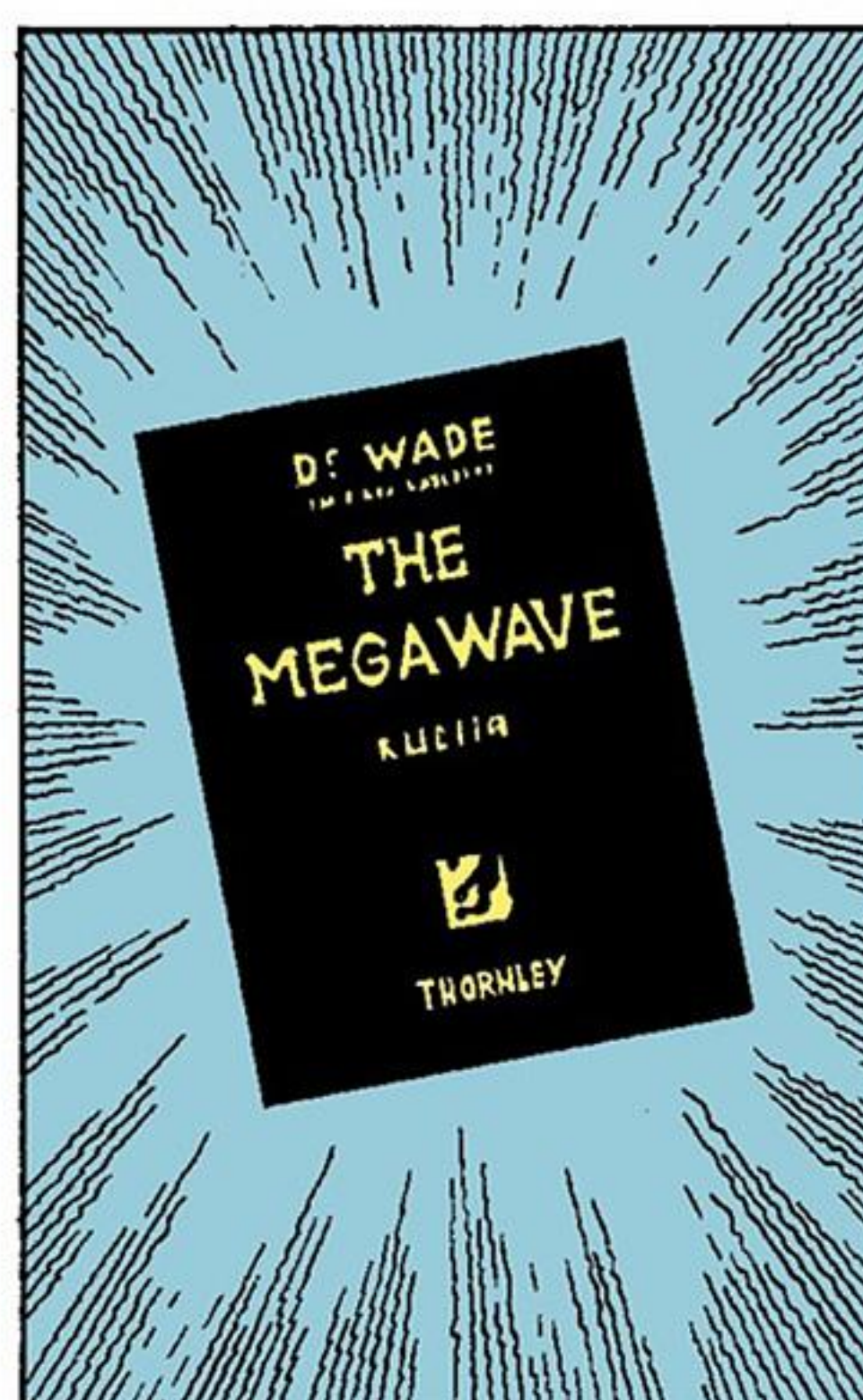
SWALLOWING A CRY OF DISMAY, BLAKE WALKS ON THROUGH THE VAST ROOM. HE SOON DISCOVERS THAT EVERY SHELF IN THE LIBRARY IS FILLED WITH A SINGLE BOOK...



...THAT WRITTEN BY PROFESSOR SEPTIMUS UNDER HIS PSEUDONYM OF DR WADE!



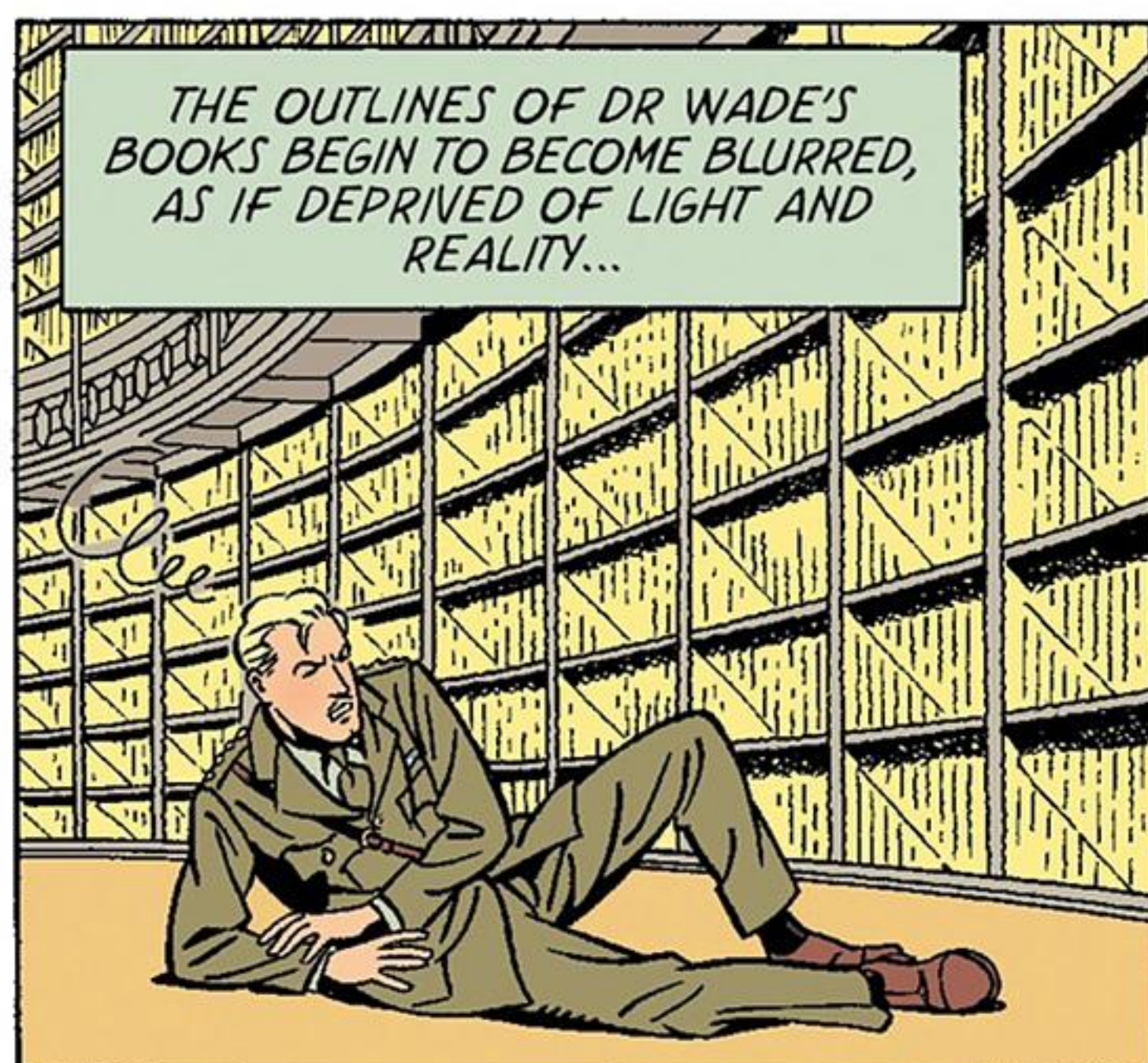
INTRIGUED, THE CAPTAIN REACHES OUT TO PICK UP ONE OF THE COPIES.



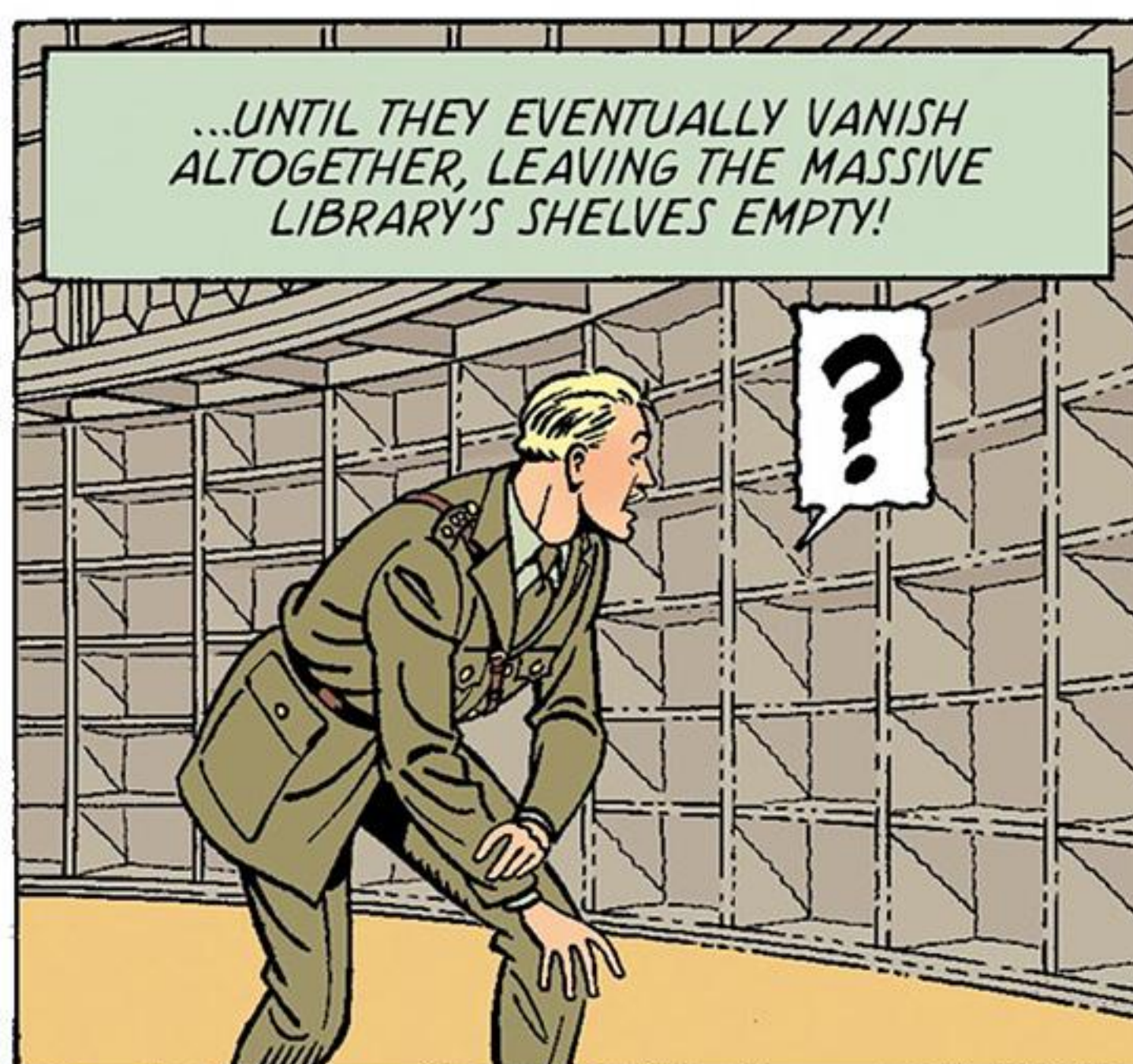
DR WADE
THE
MEGAWAVE
KULLIA
THORNLEY



HE'S IMMEDIATELY THROWN BACK BY AN ELECTRIC SHOCK!



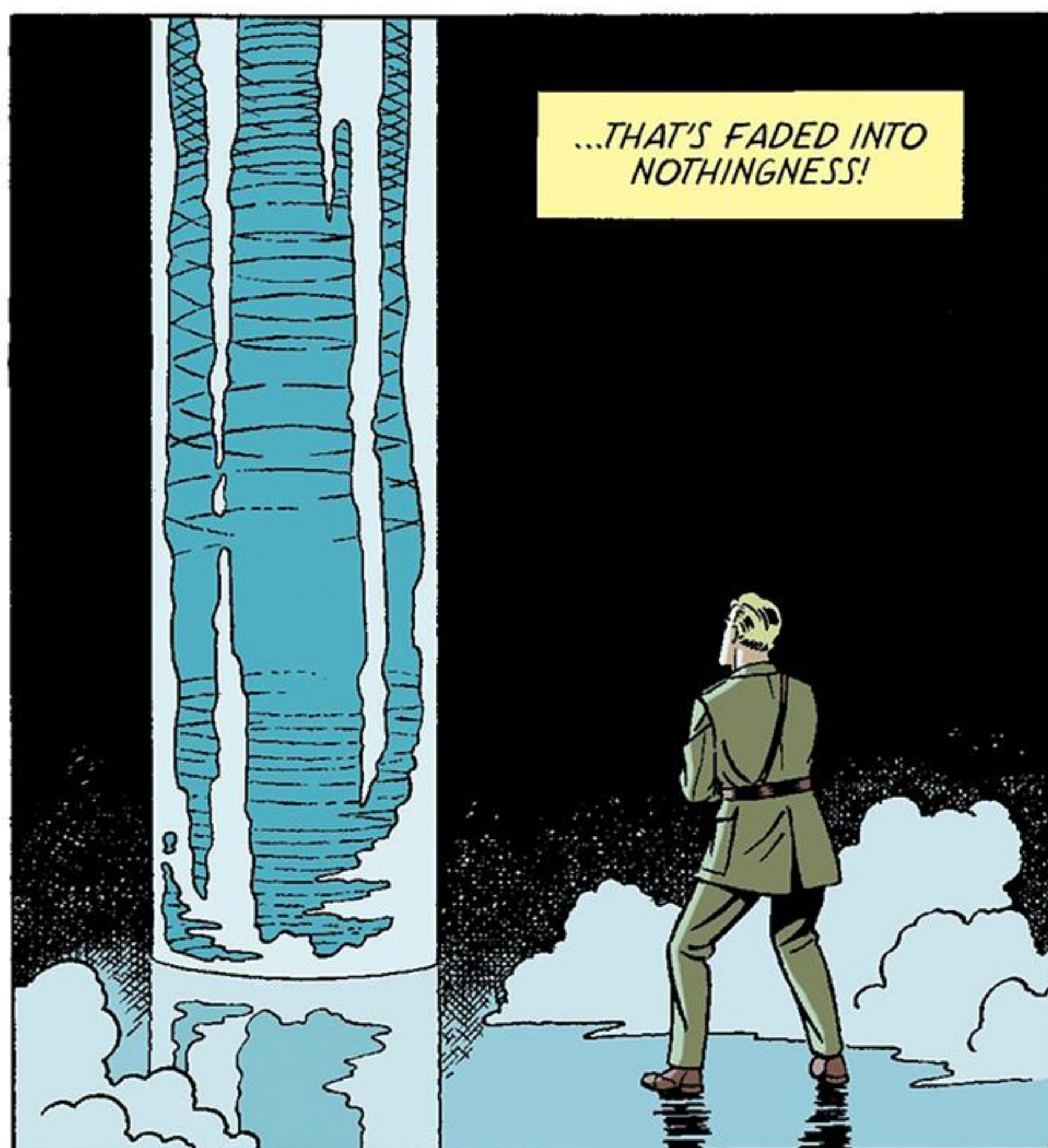
THE OUTLINES OF DR WADE'S BOOKS BEGIN TO BECOME BLURRED, AS IF DEPRIVED OF LIGHT AND REALITY...



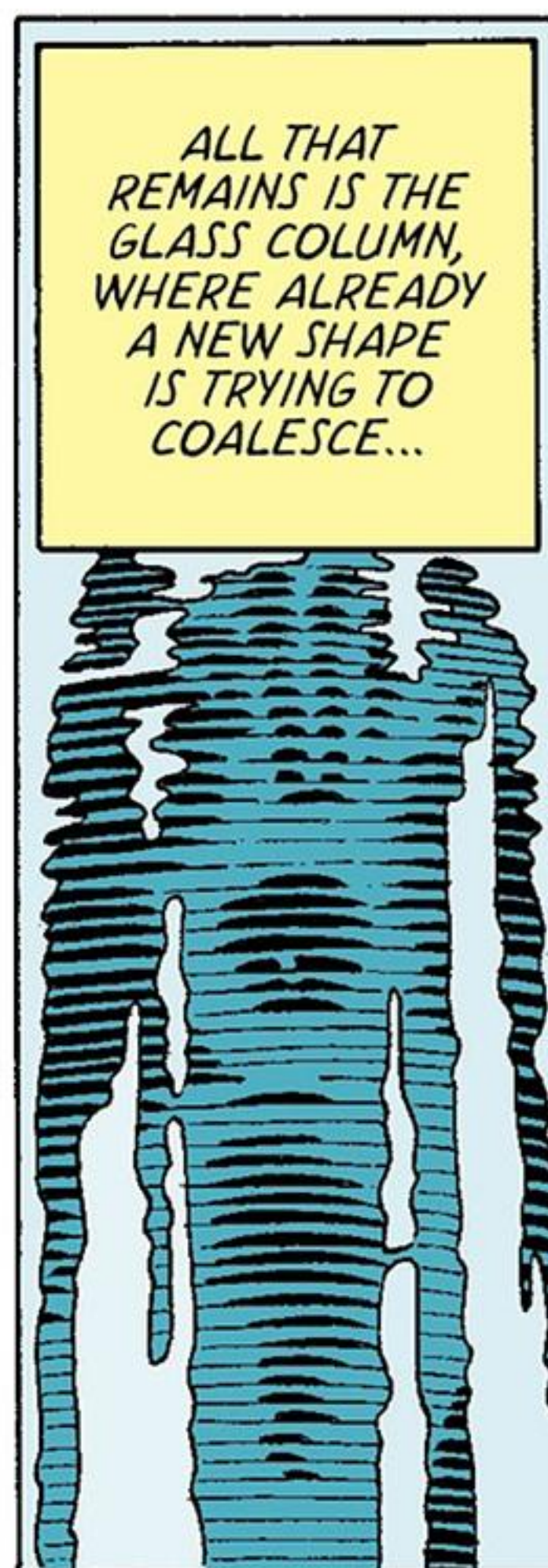
...UNTIL THEY EVENTUALLY VANISH ALTOGETHER, LEAVING THE MASSIVE LIBRARY'S SHELVES EMPTY!



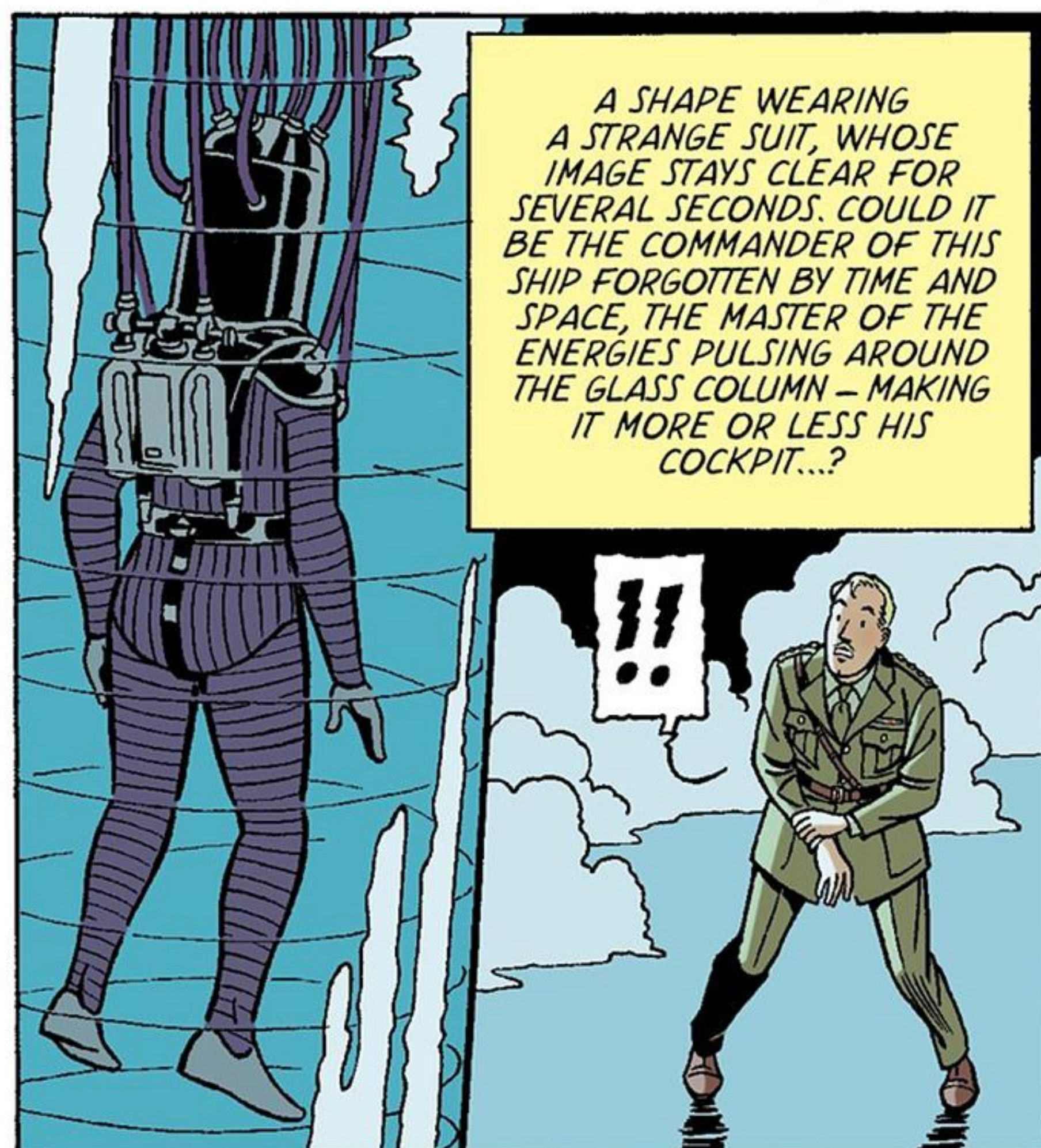
THE PHENOMENON INCREASES, AND SOON IT'S THE ENTIRE ROOM, WITH ITS AIR OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM...



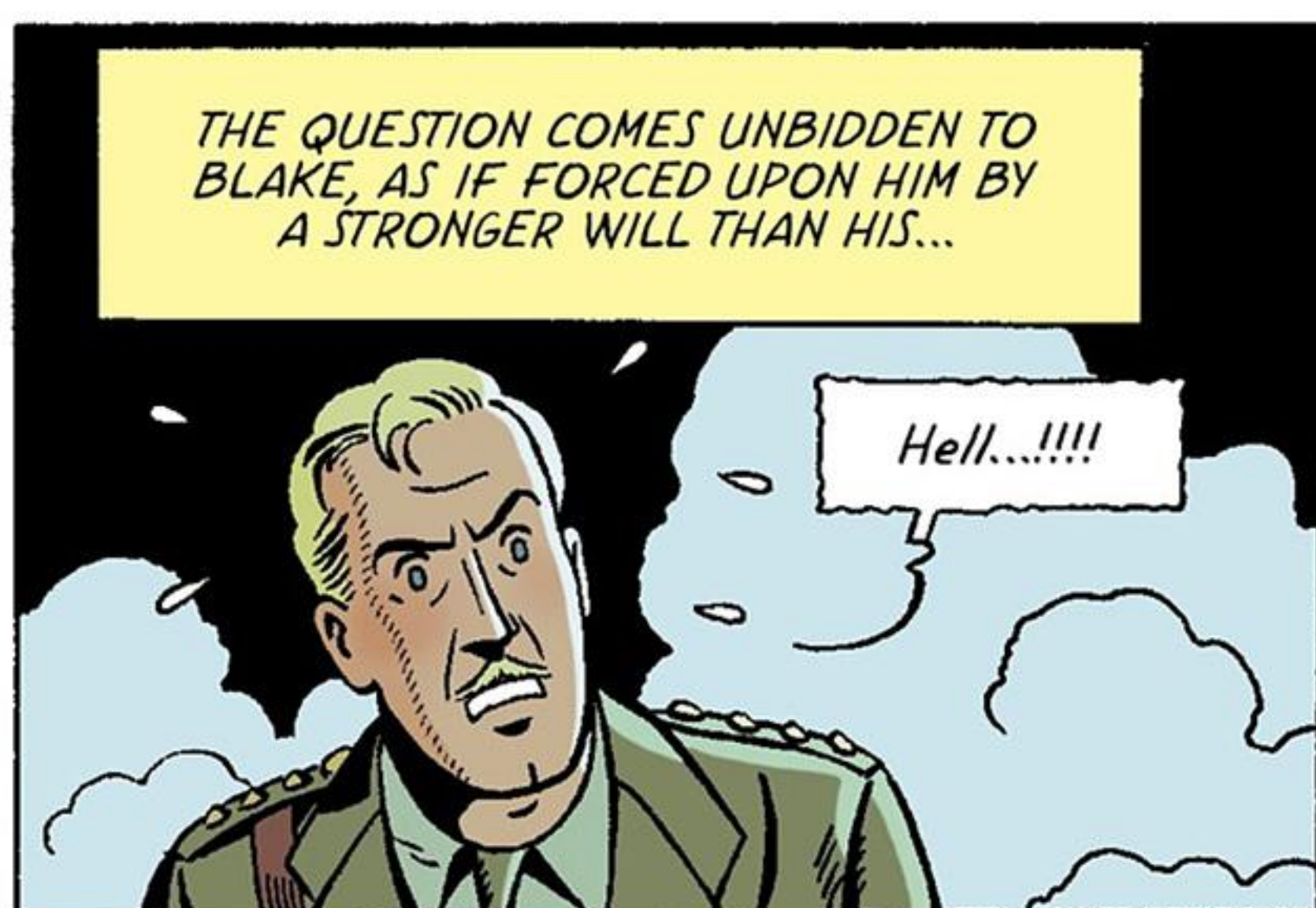
...THAT'S FADED INTO NOTHINGNESS!



ALL THAT REMAINS IS THE GLASS COLUMN, WHERE ALREADY A NEW SHAPE IS TRYING TO COALESCE...



A SHAPE WEARING A STRANGE SUIT, WHOSE IMAGE STAYS CLEAR FOR SEVERAL SECONDS. COULD IT BE THE COMMANDER OF THIS SHIP FORGOTTEN BY TIME AND SPACE, THE MASTER OF THE ENERGIES PULSING AROUND THE GLASS COLUMN - MAKING IT MORE OR LESS HIS COCKPIT...?



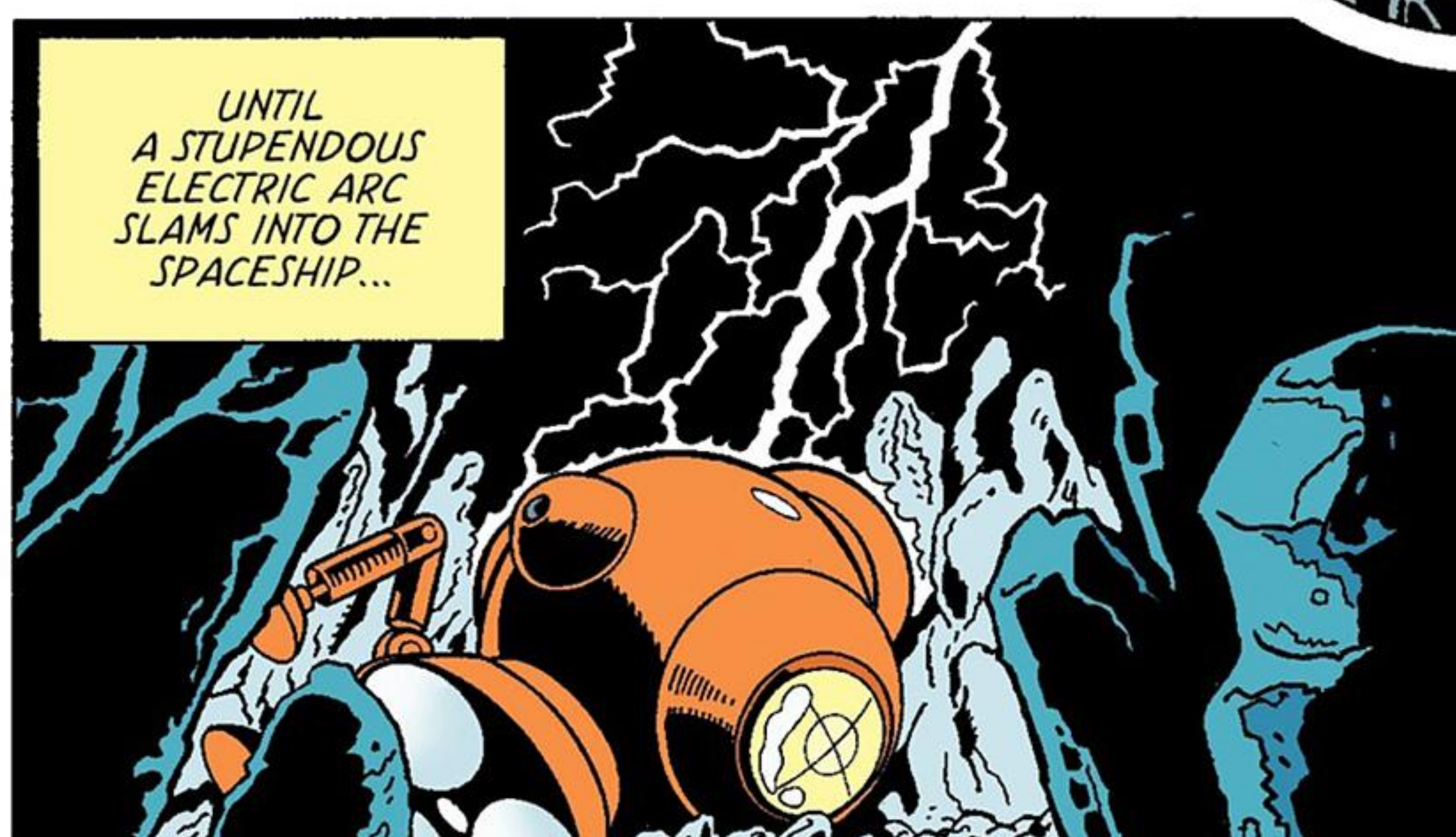
THE QUESTION COMES UNBIDDEN TO BLAKE, AS IF FORCED UPON HIM BY A STRONGER WILL THAN HIS...

Hell...!!!!

...A WILL TRYING TO LEAVE THE SUIT...



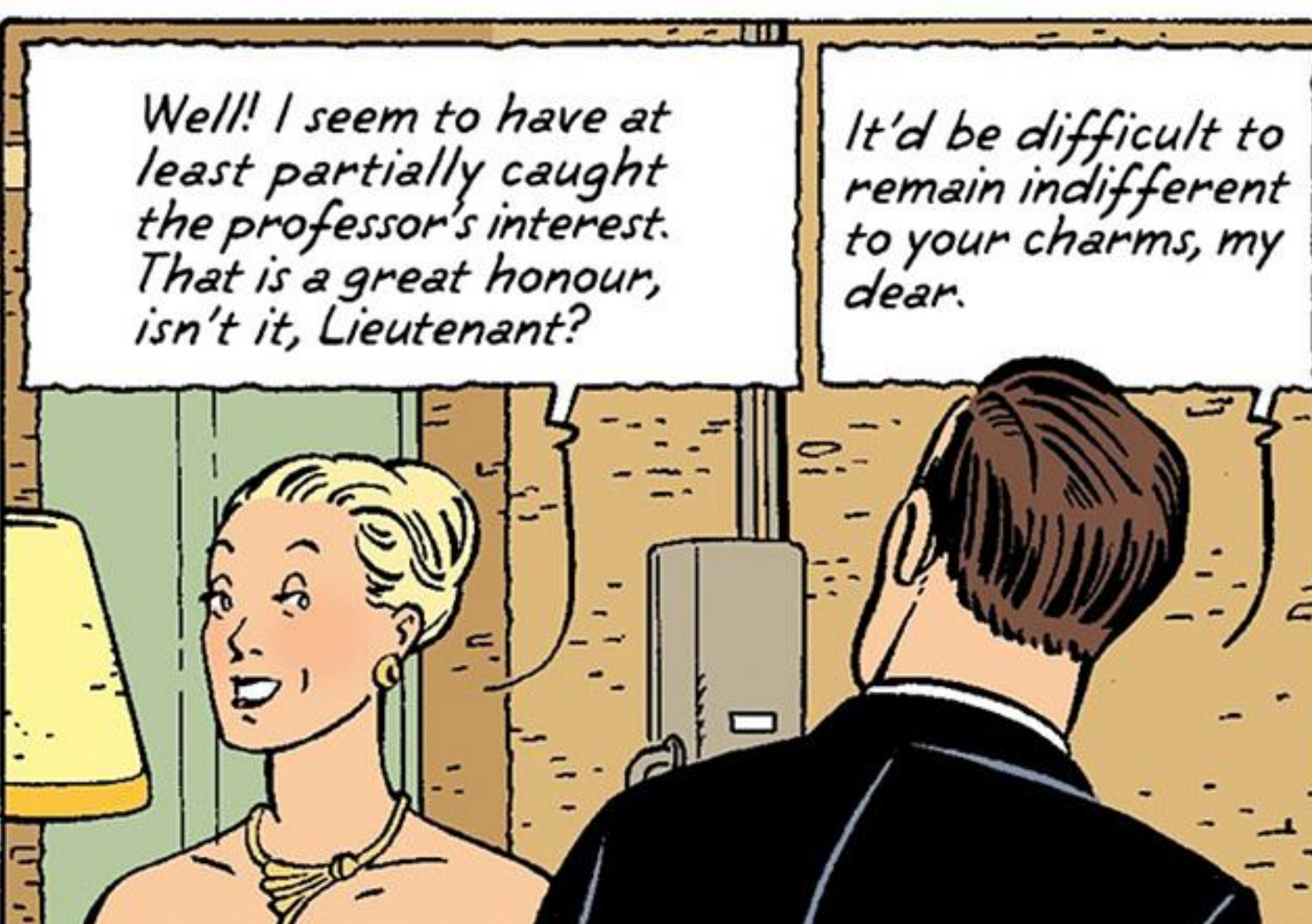
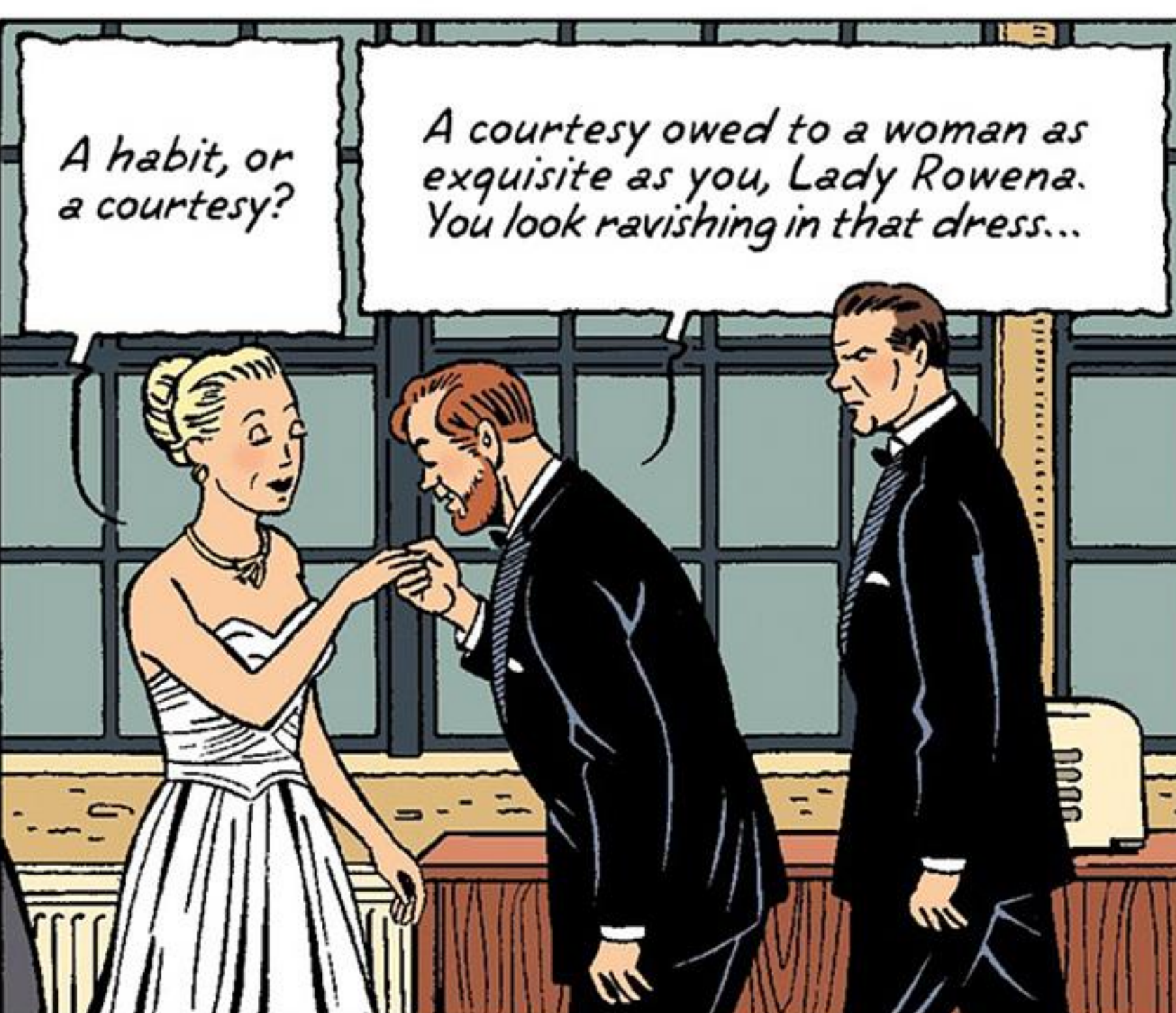
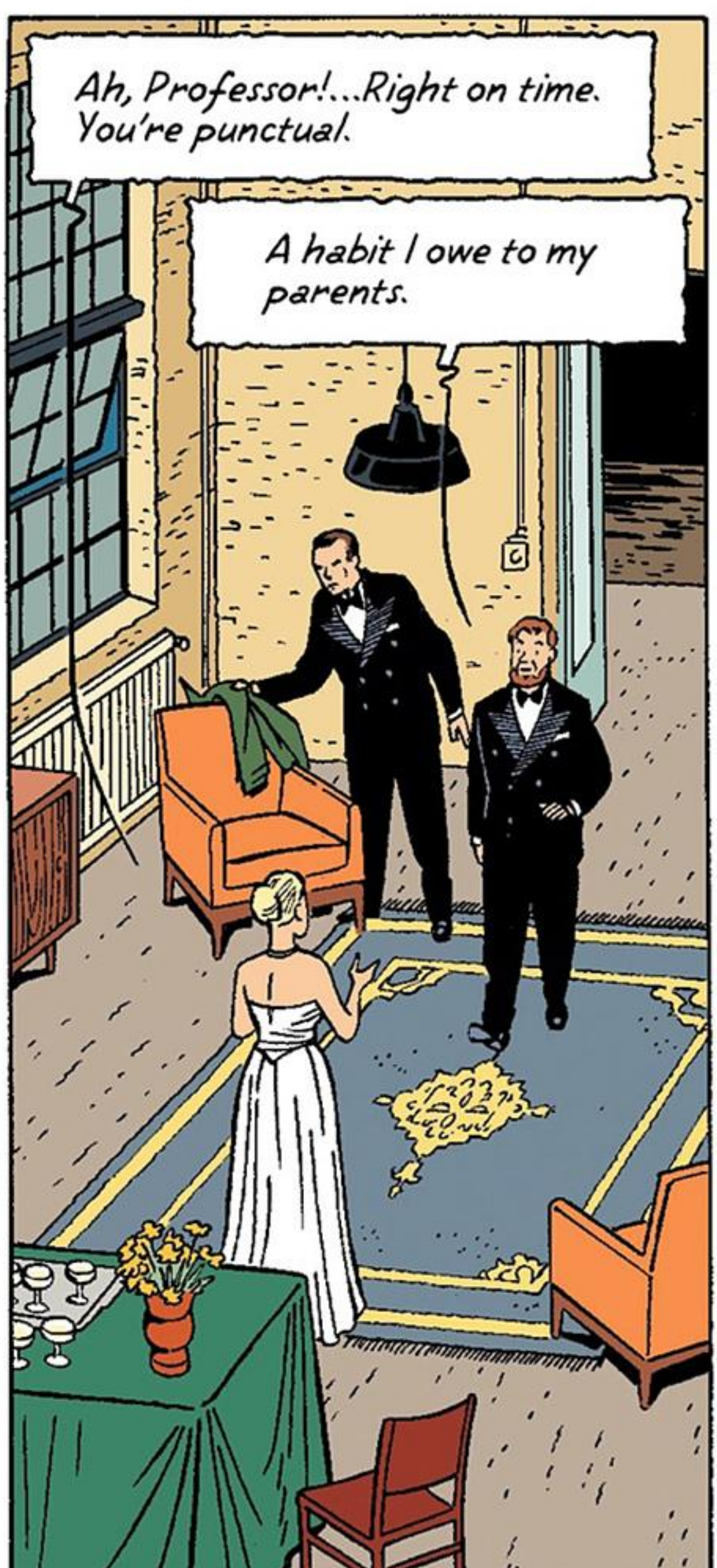
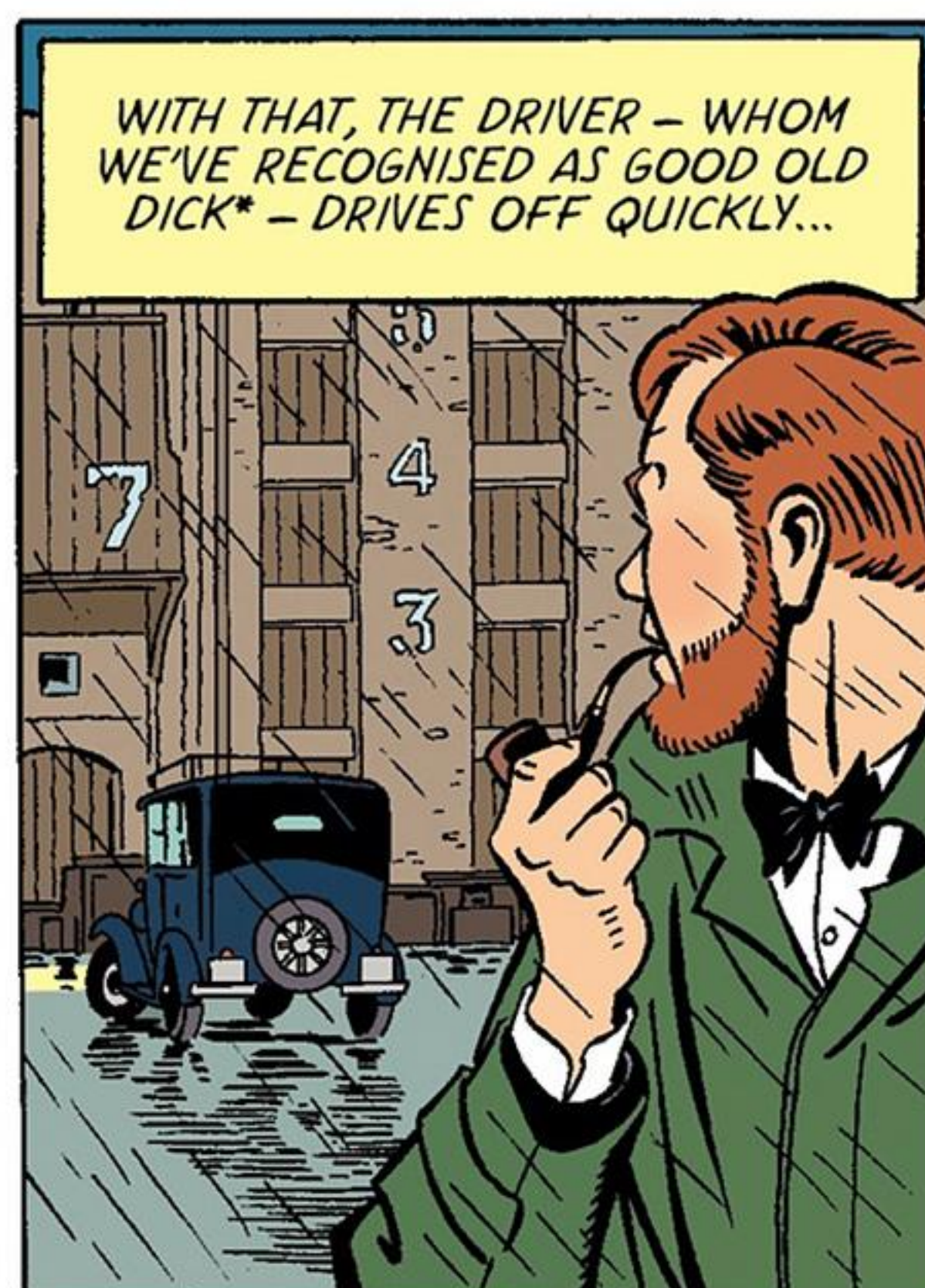
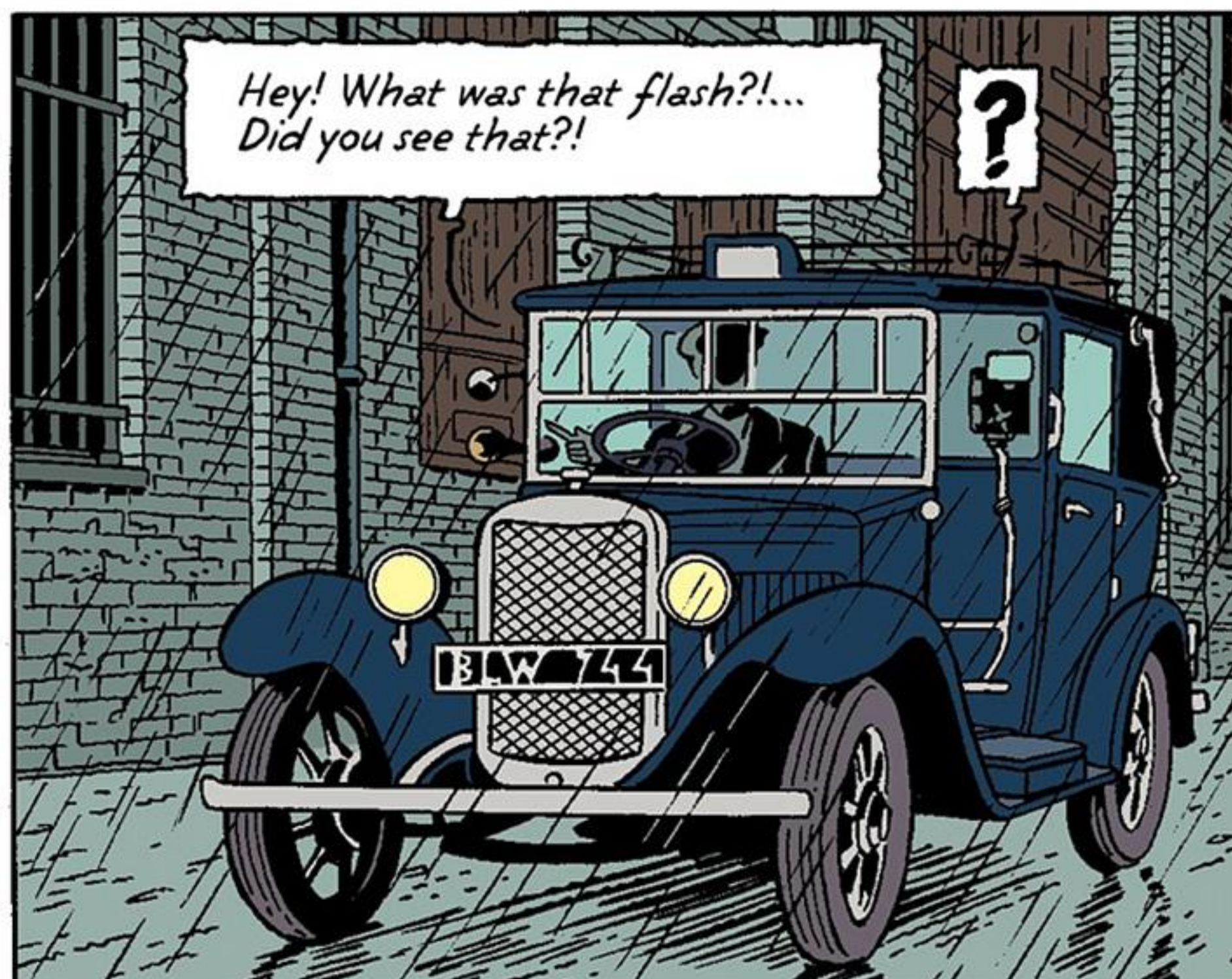
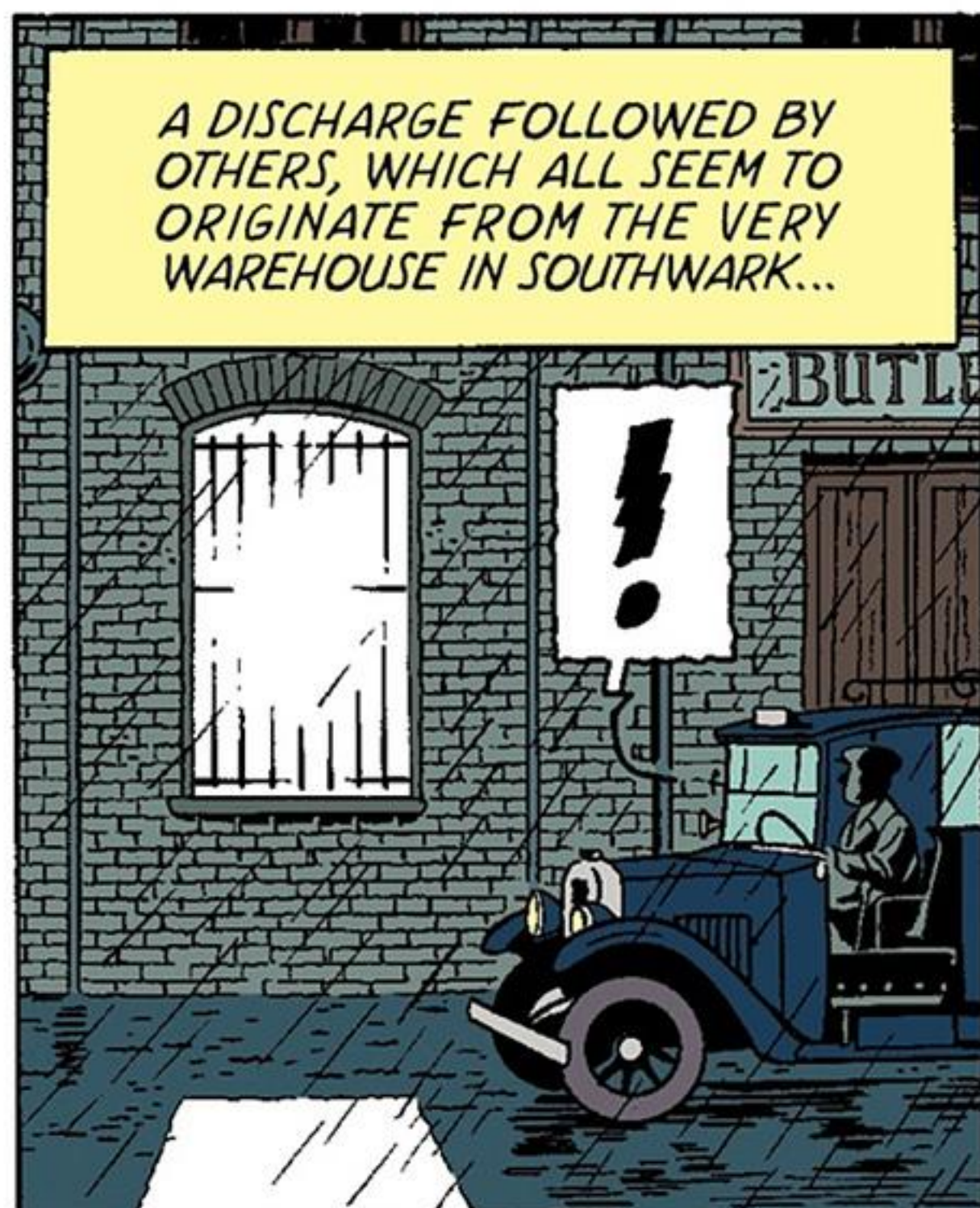
...AND TAKE ON A SHAPE SO FAR REFUSED TO IT...



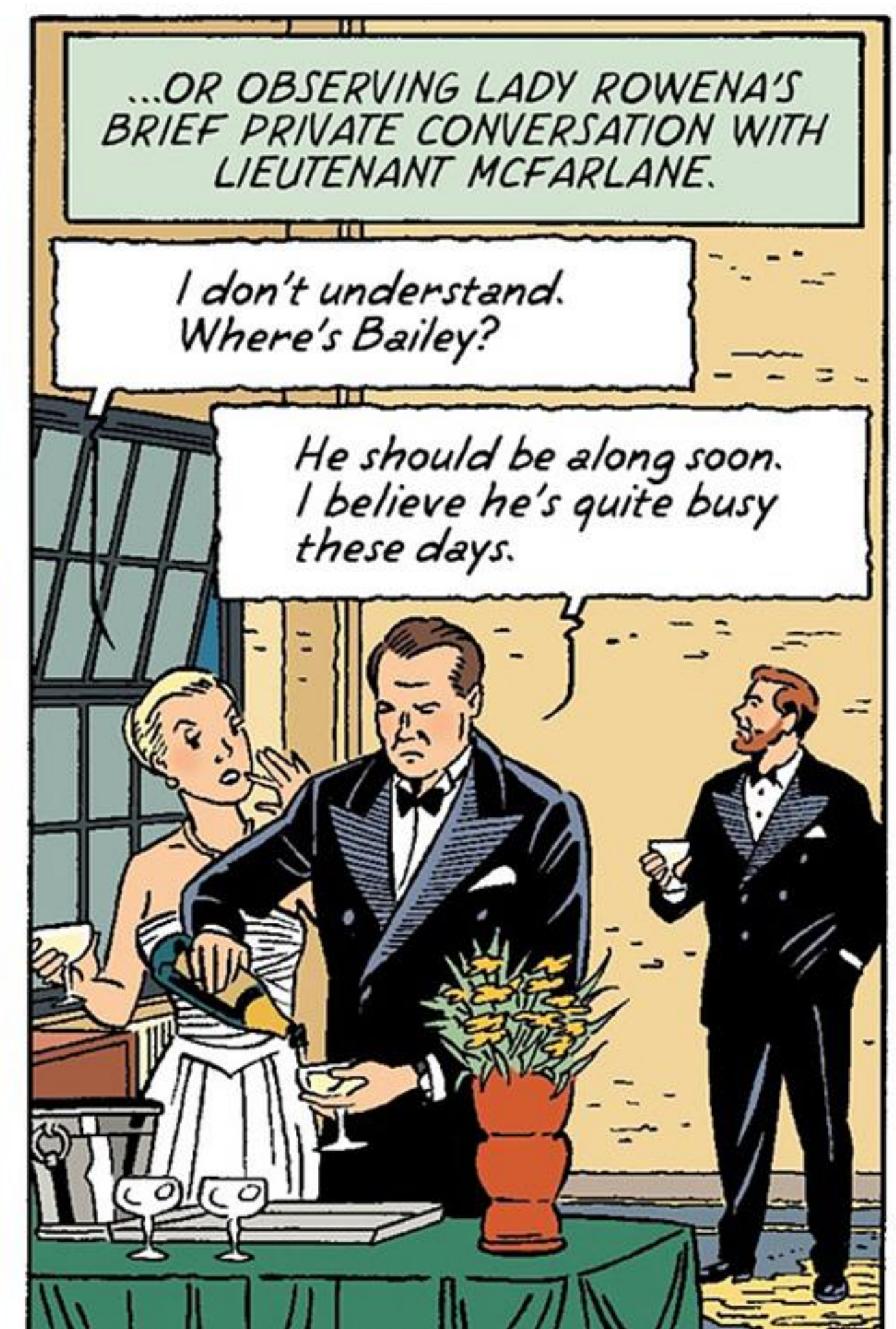
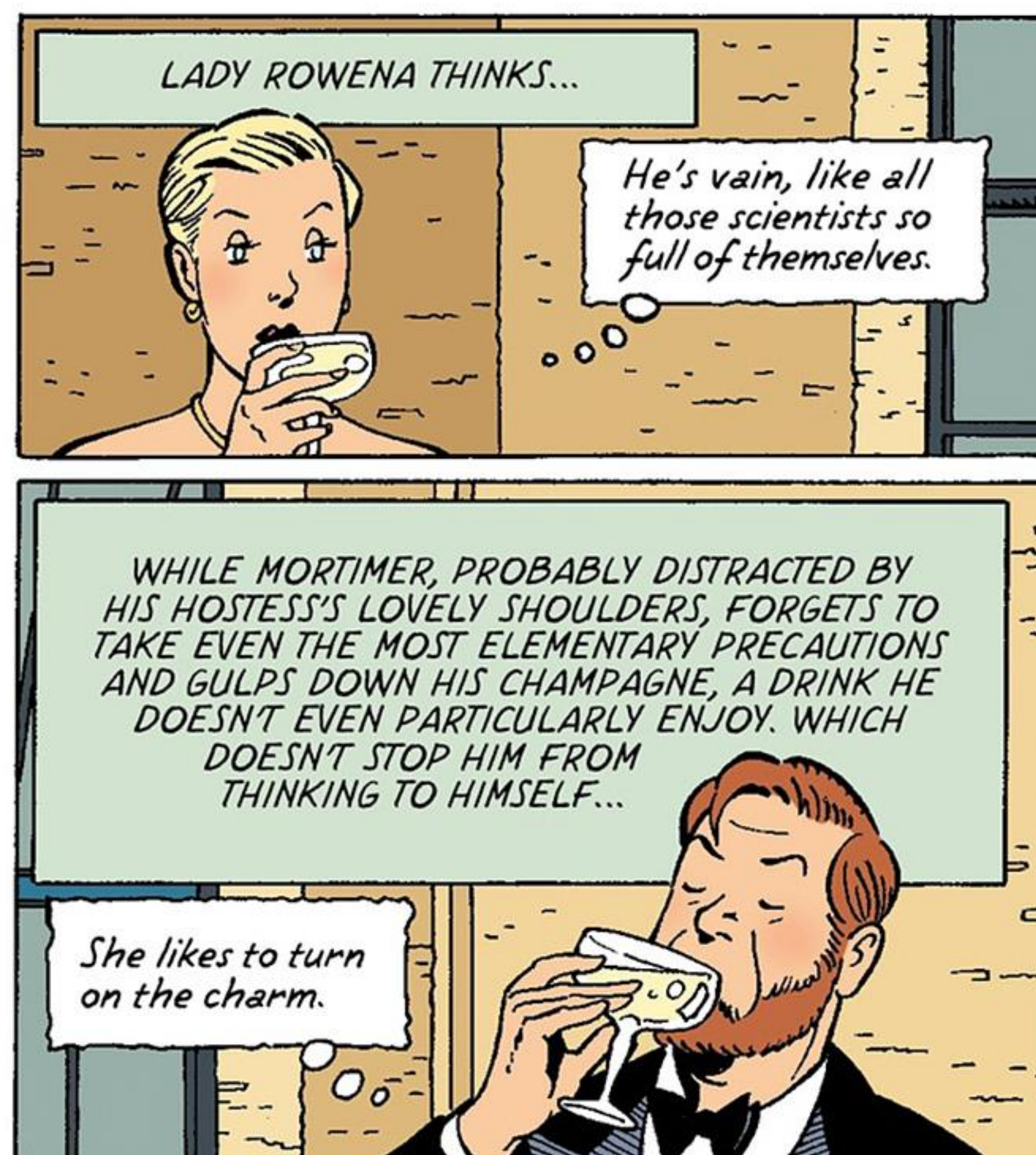
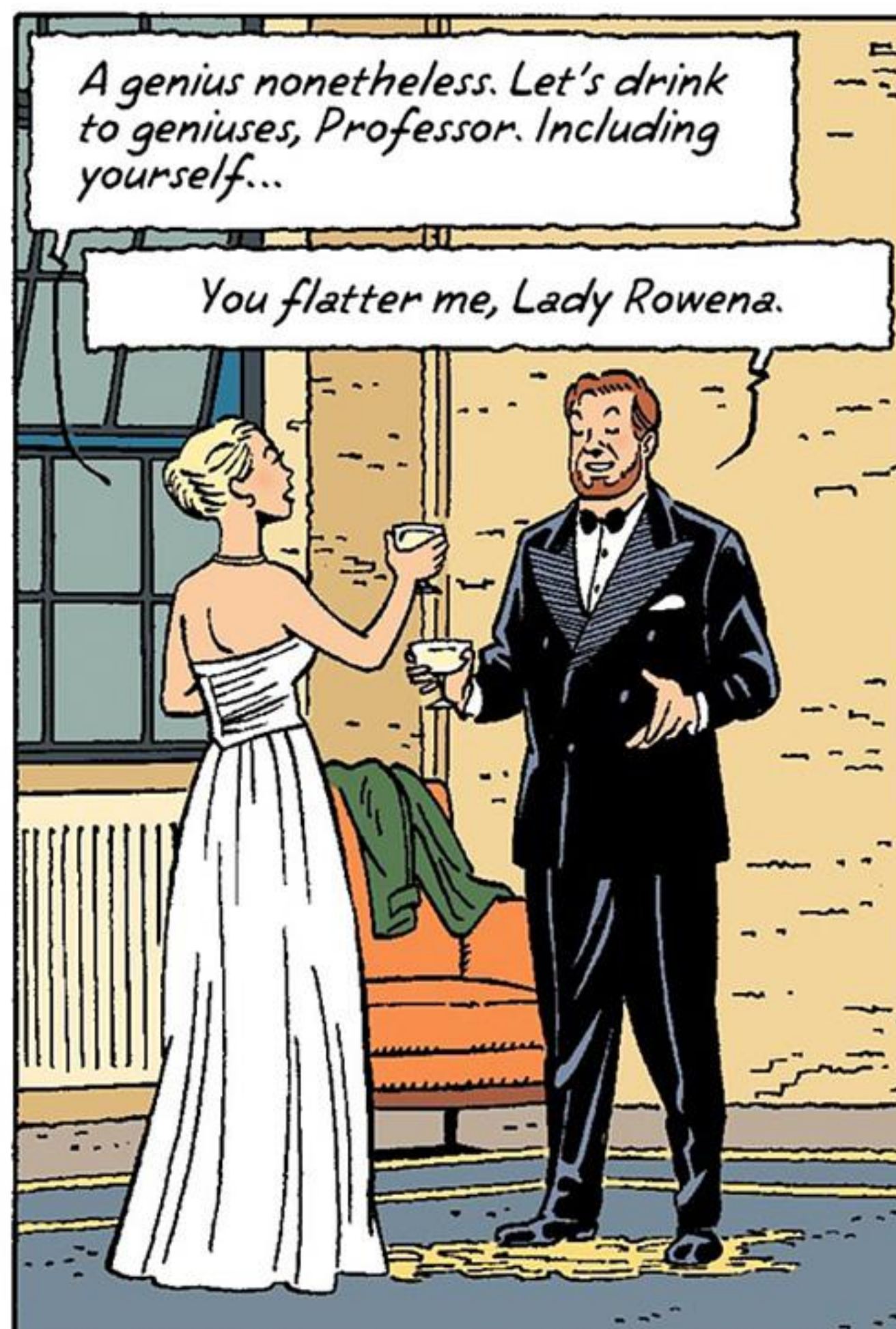
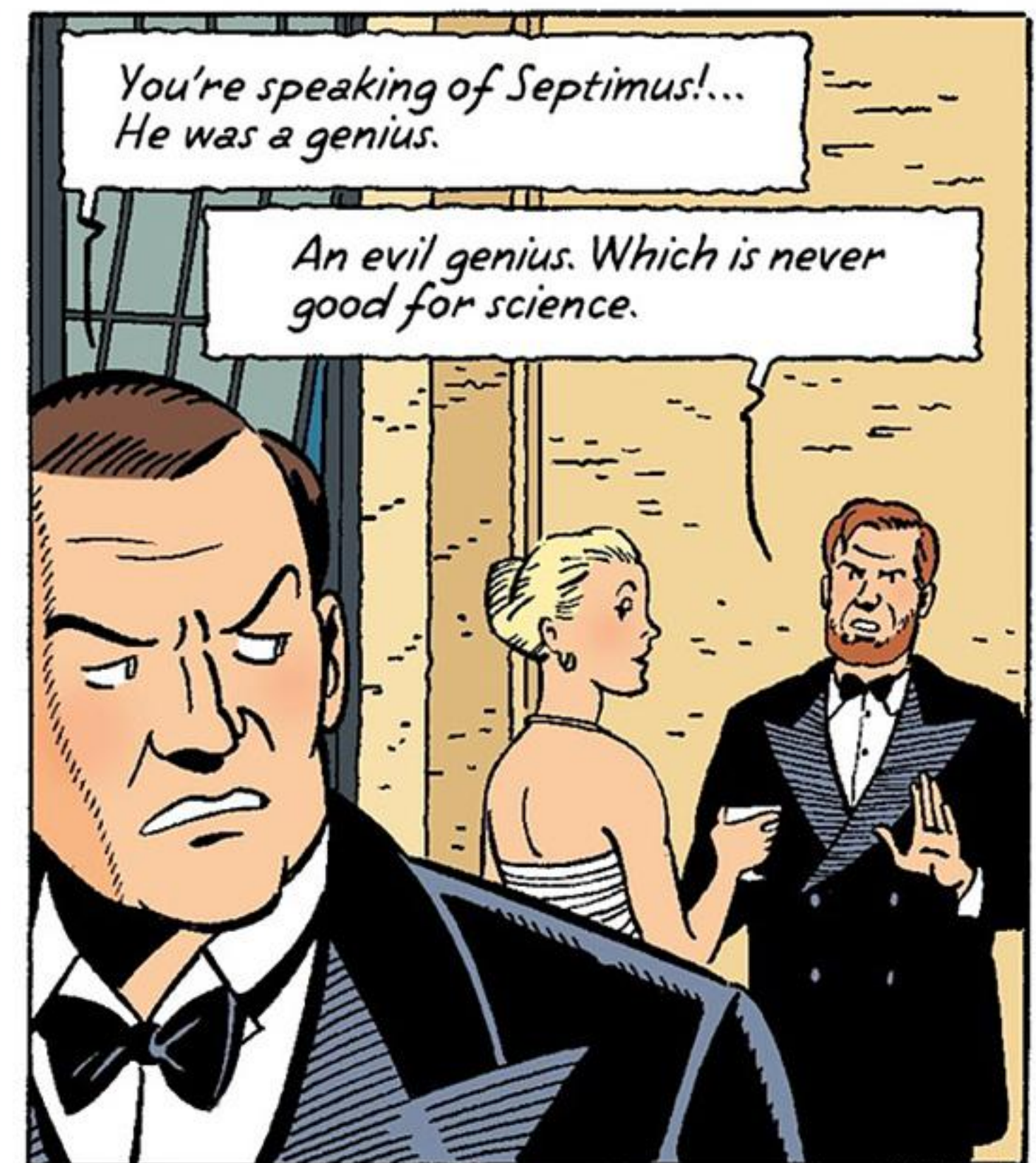
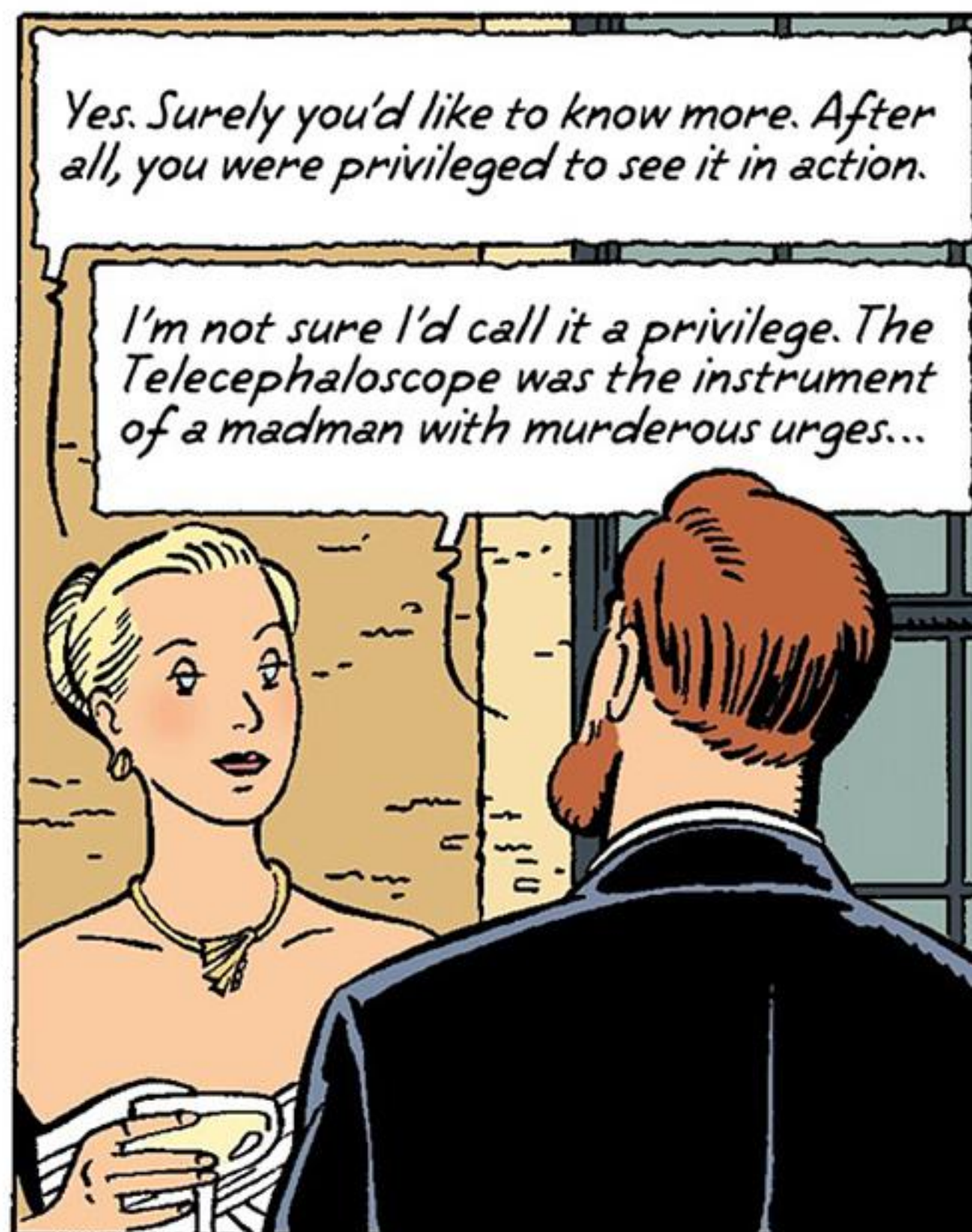
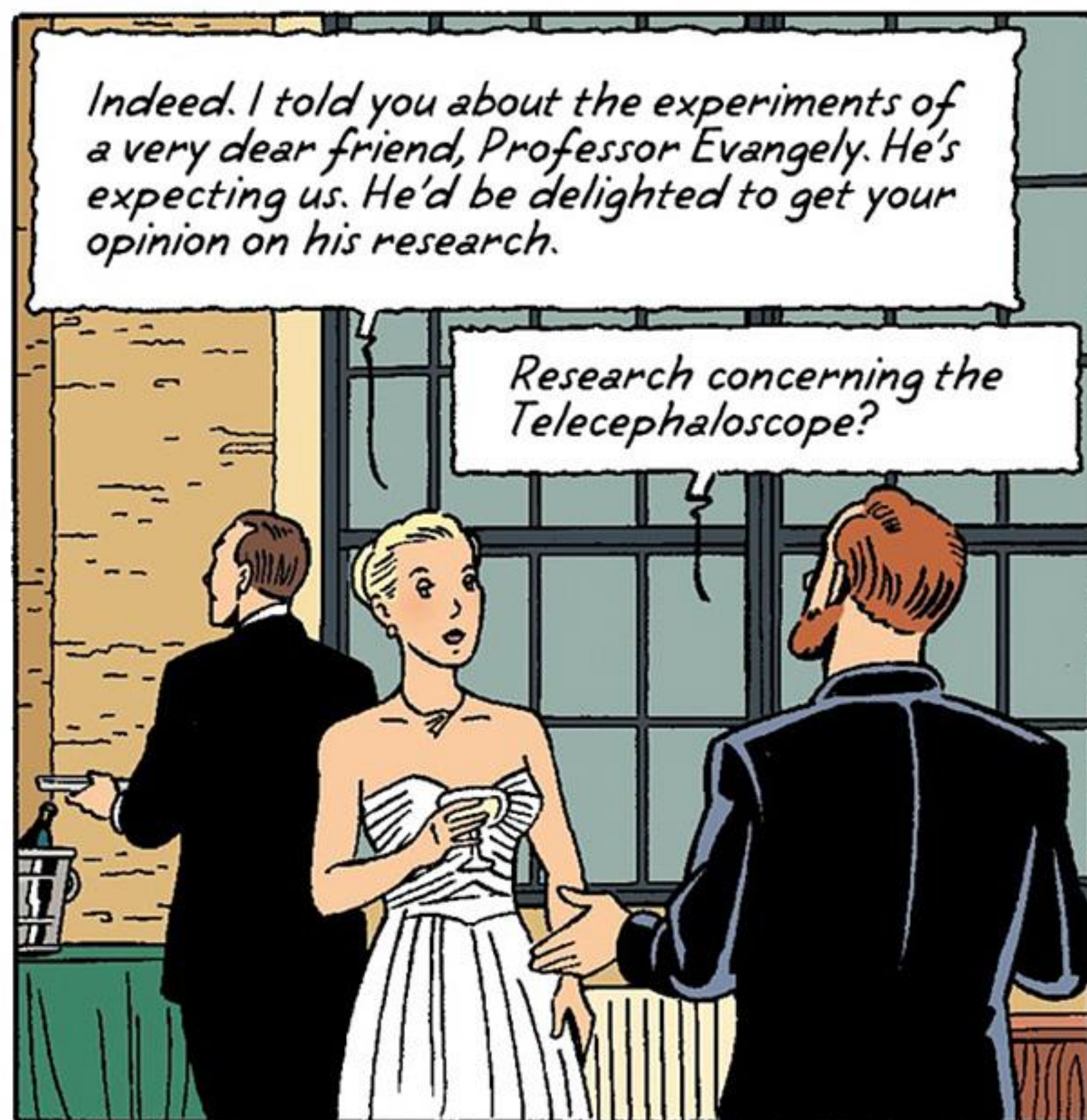
UNTIL A STUPENDOUS ELECTRIC ARC SLAMS INTO THE SPACESHIP...

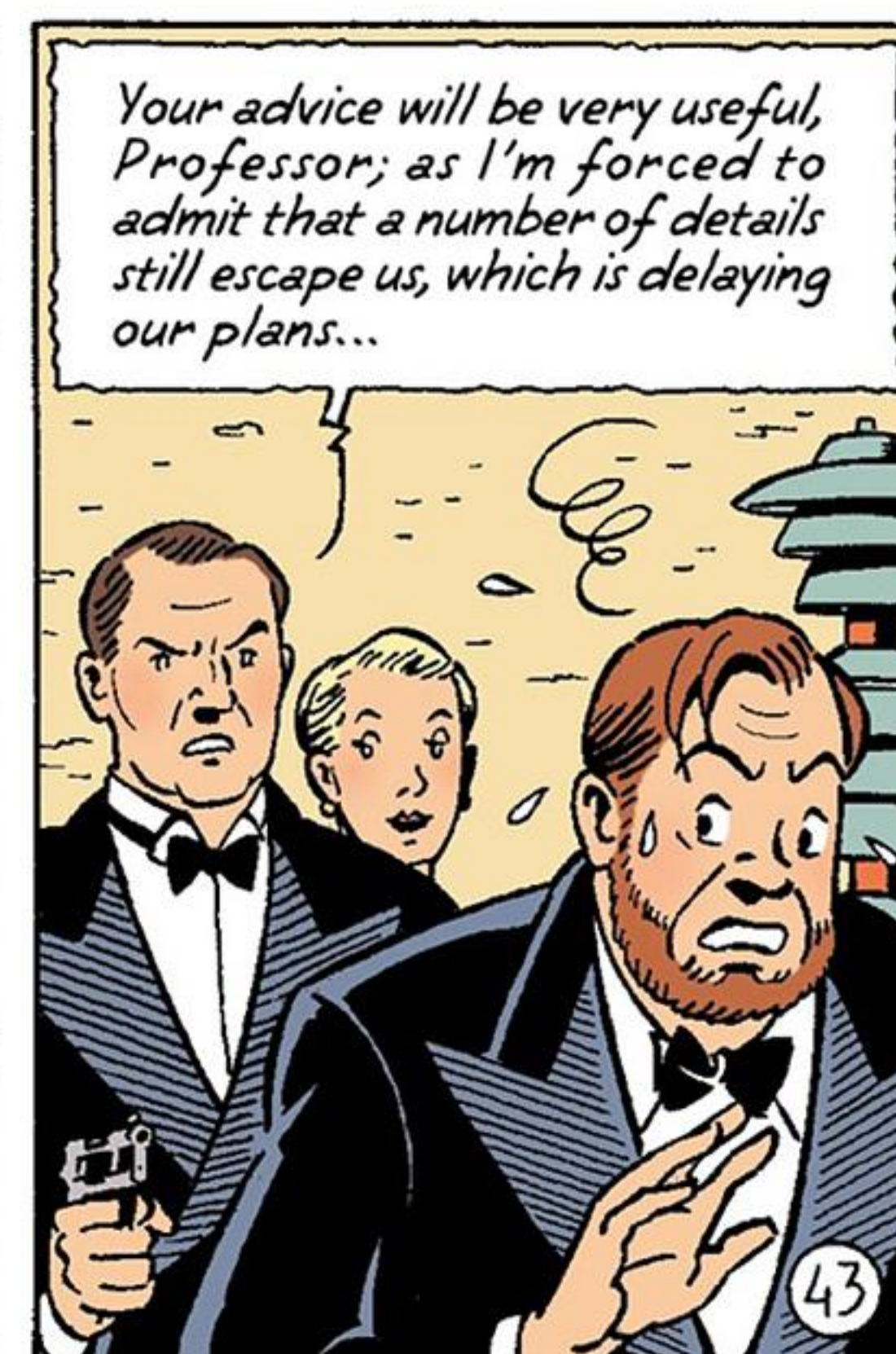
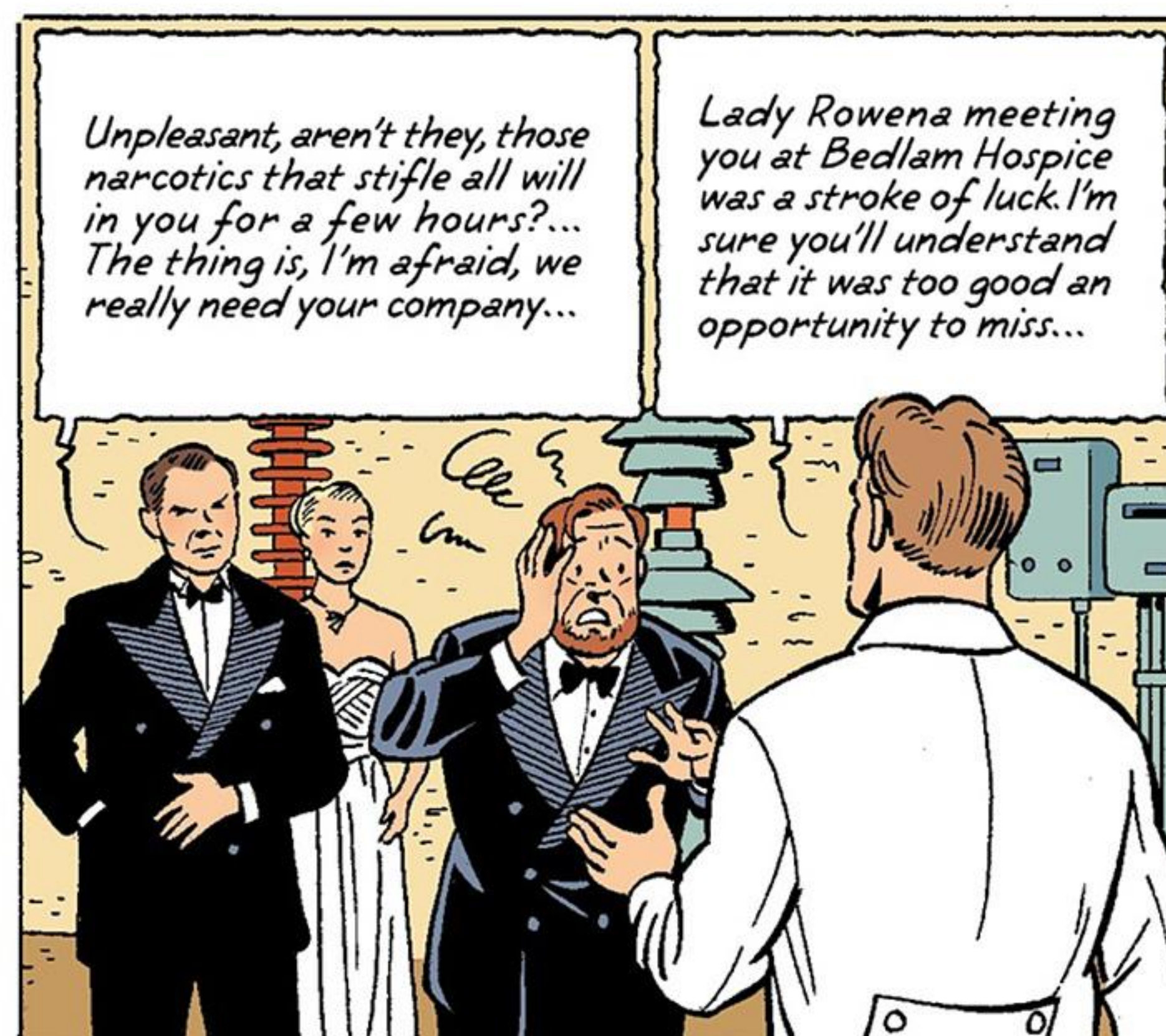
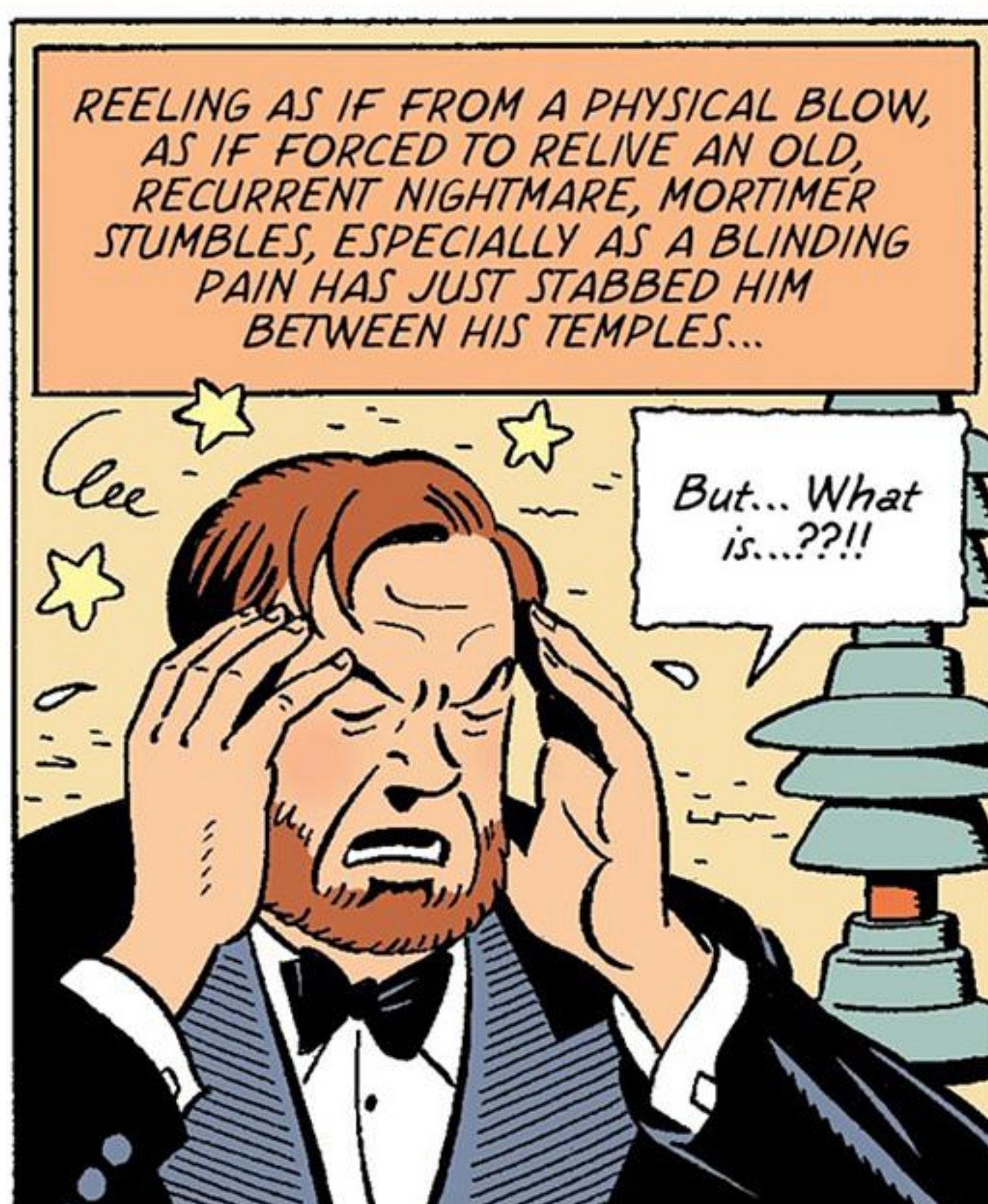
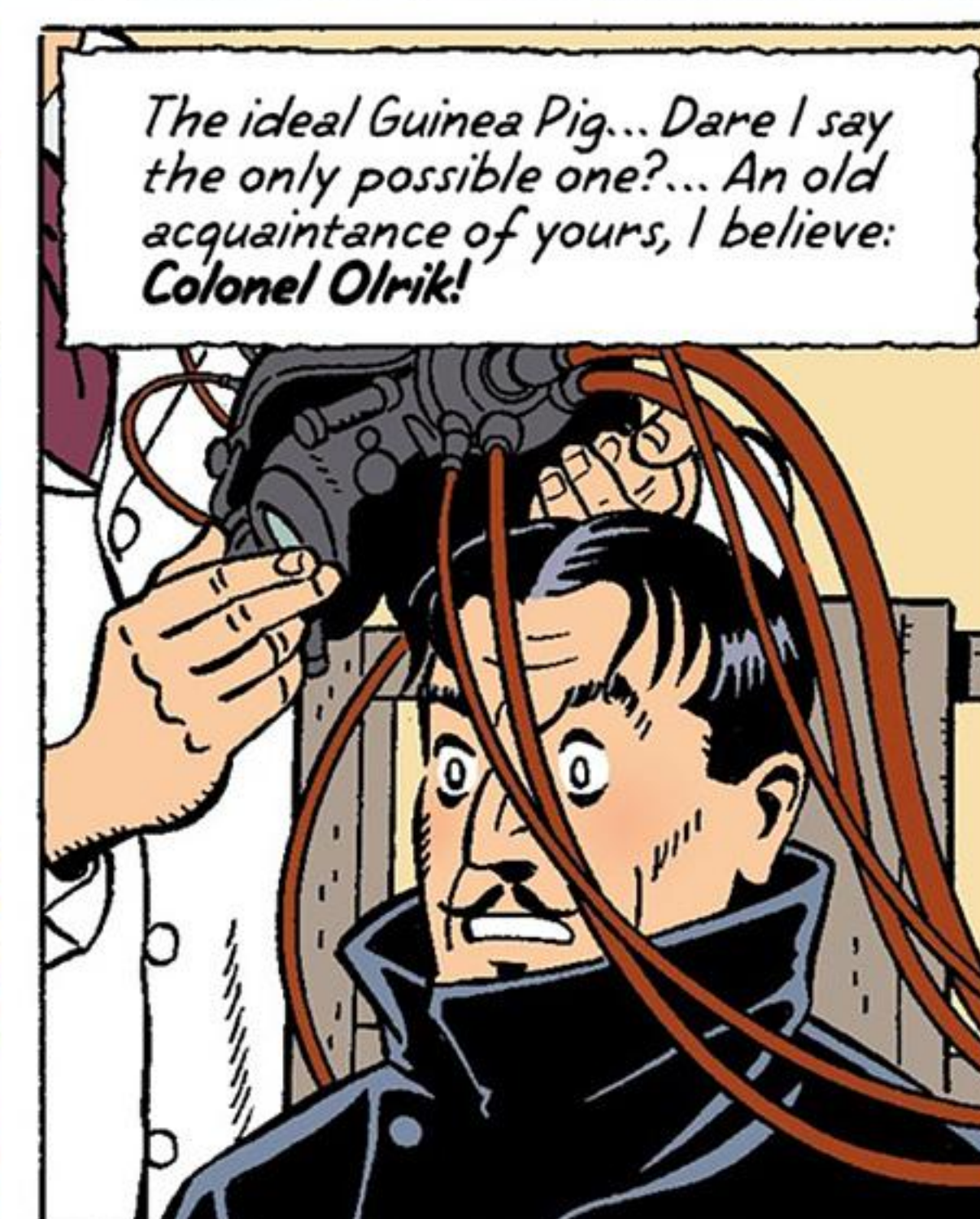
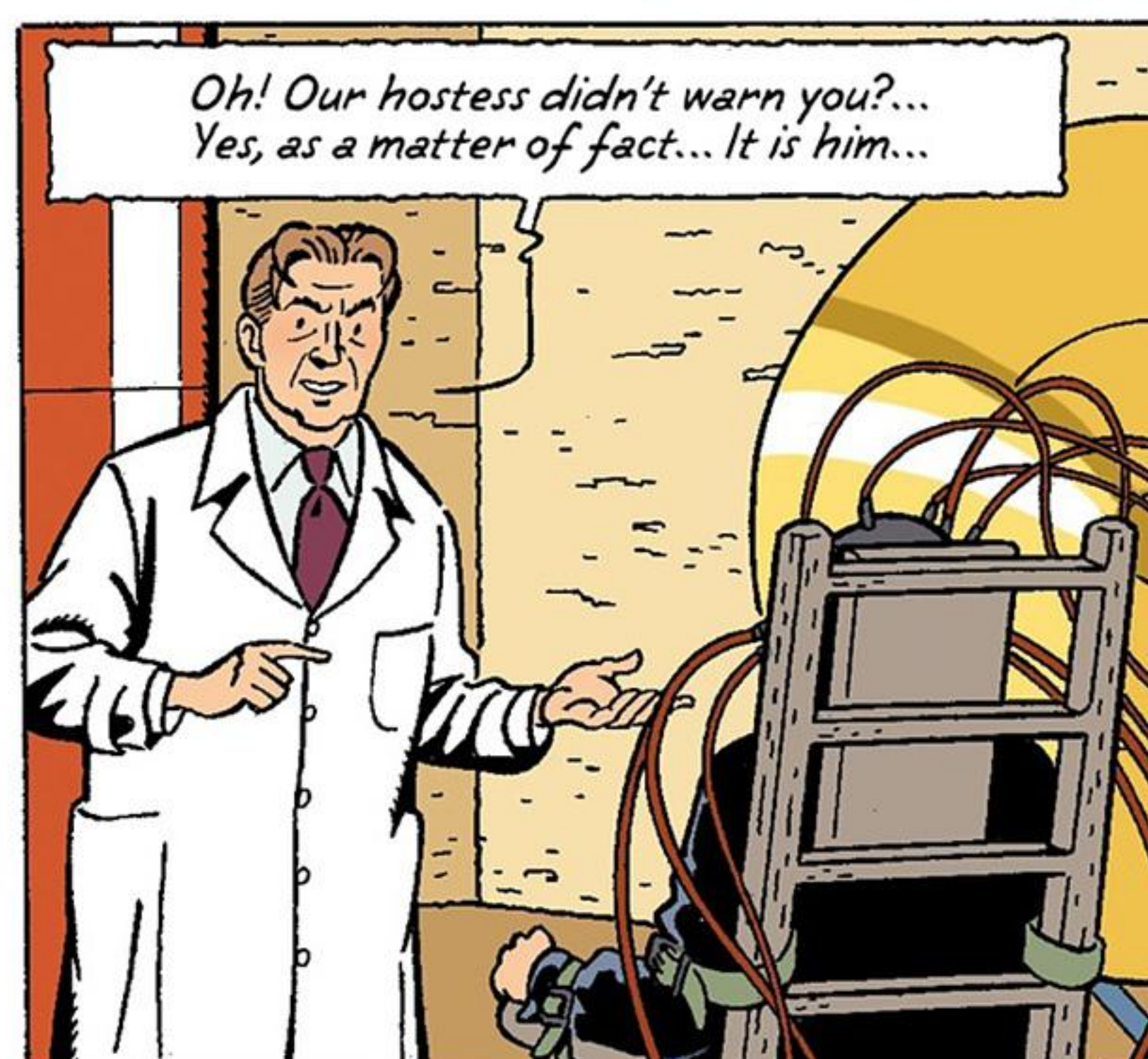
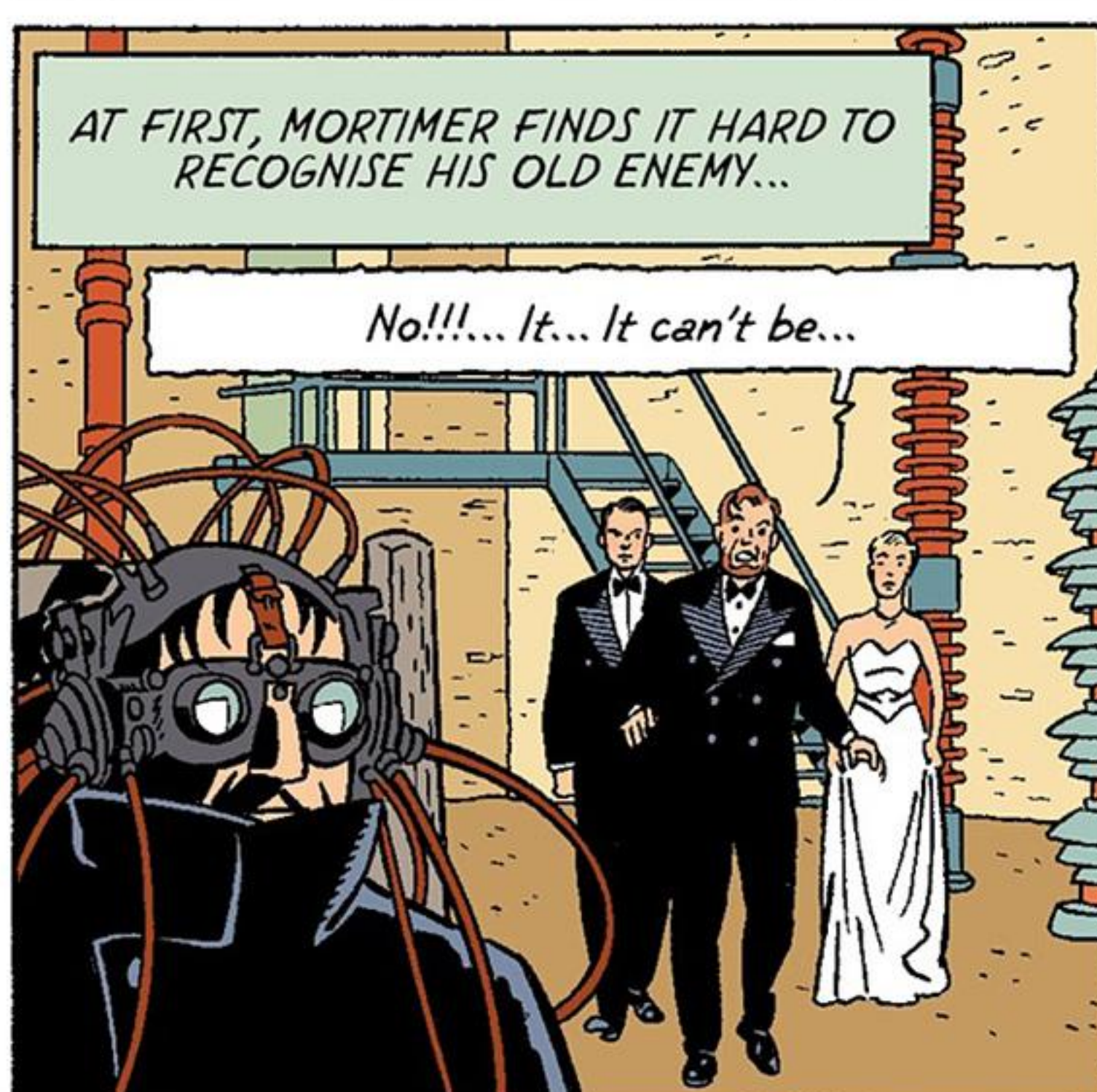
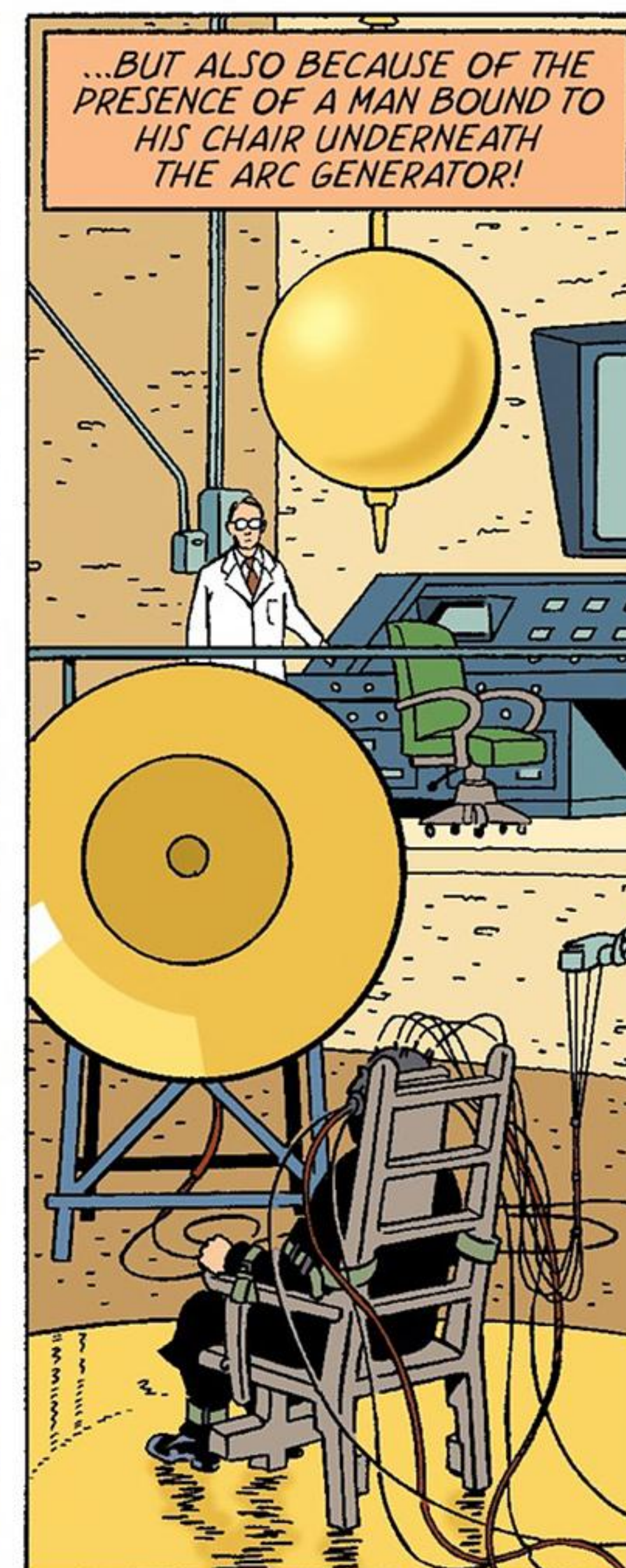
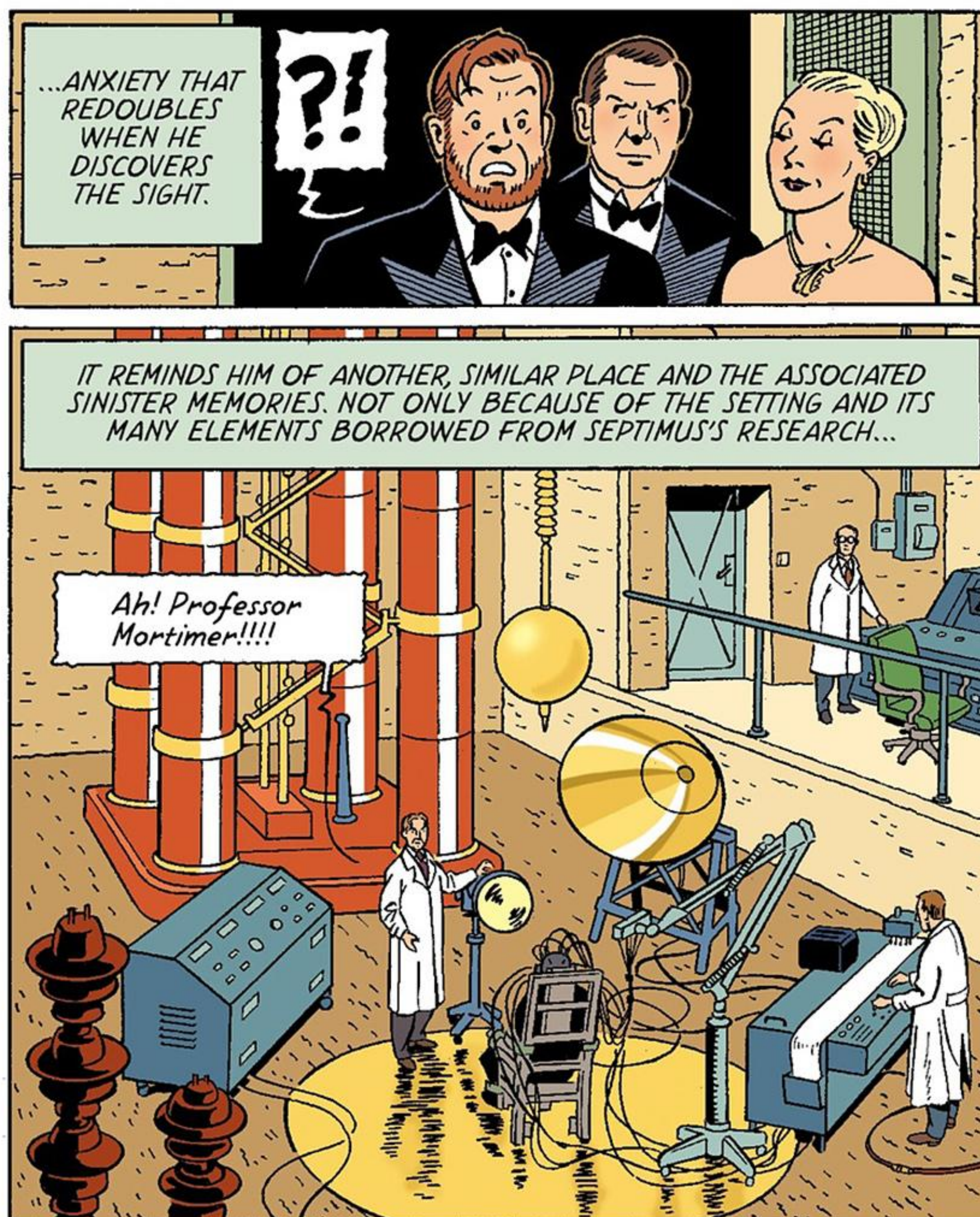


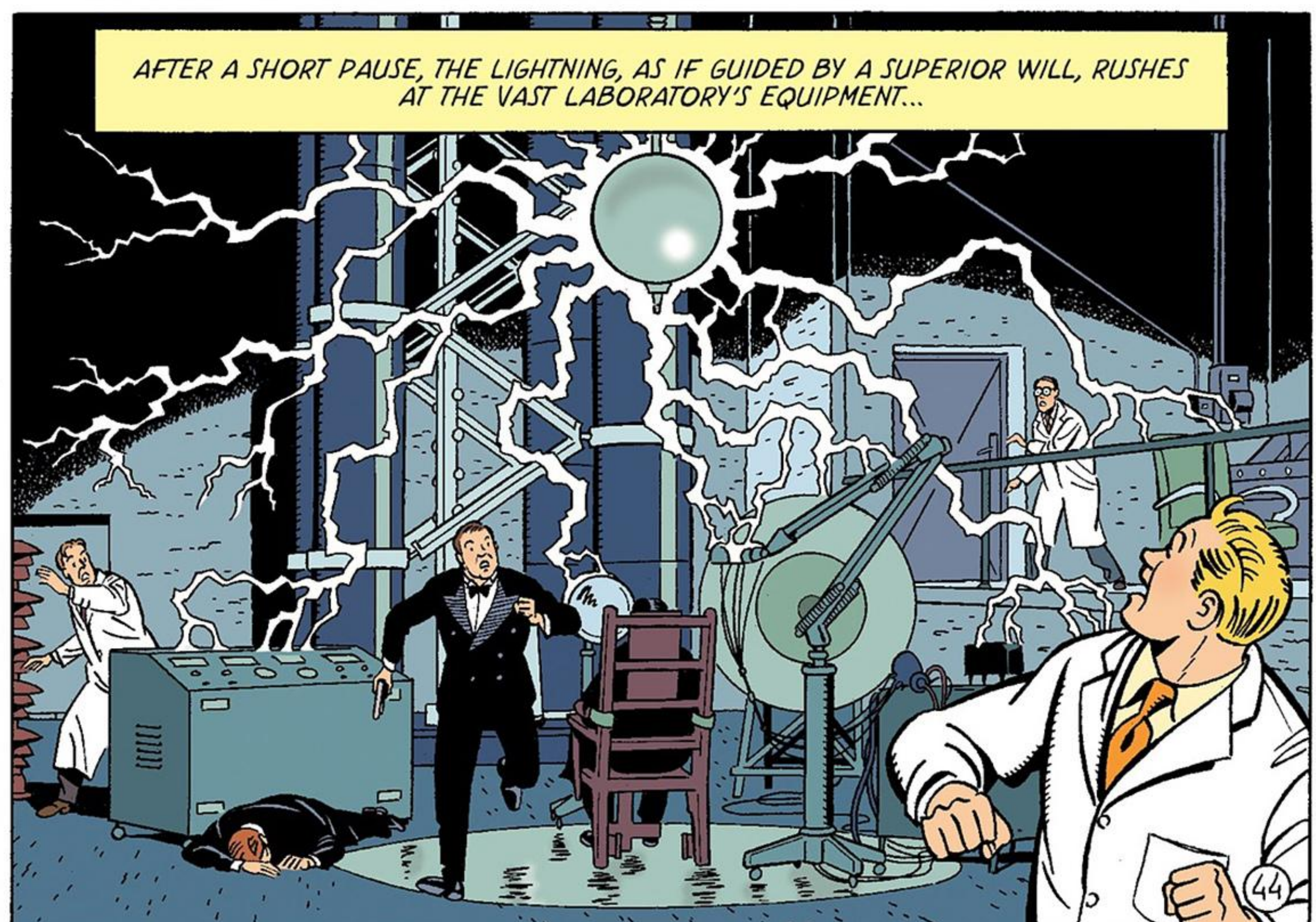
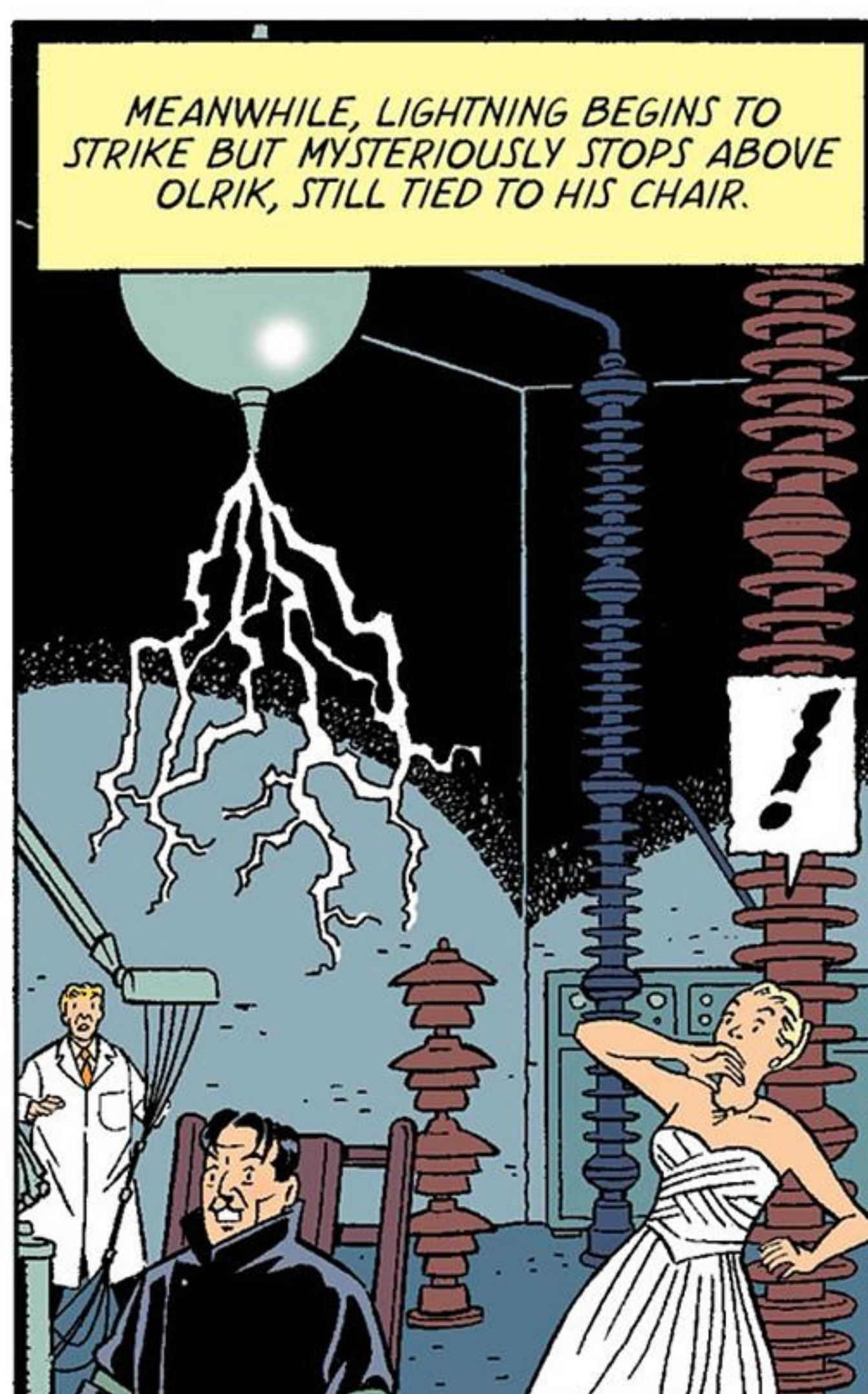
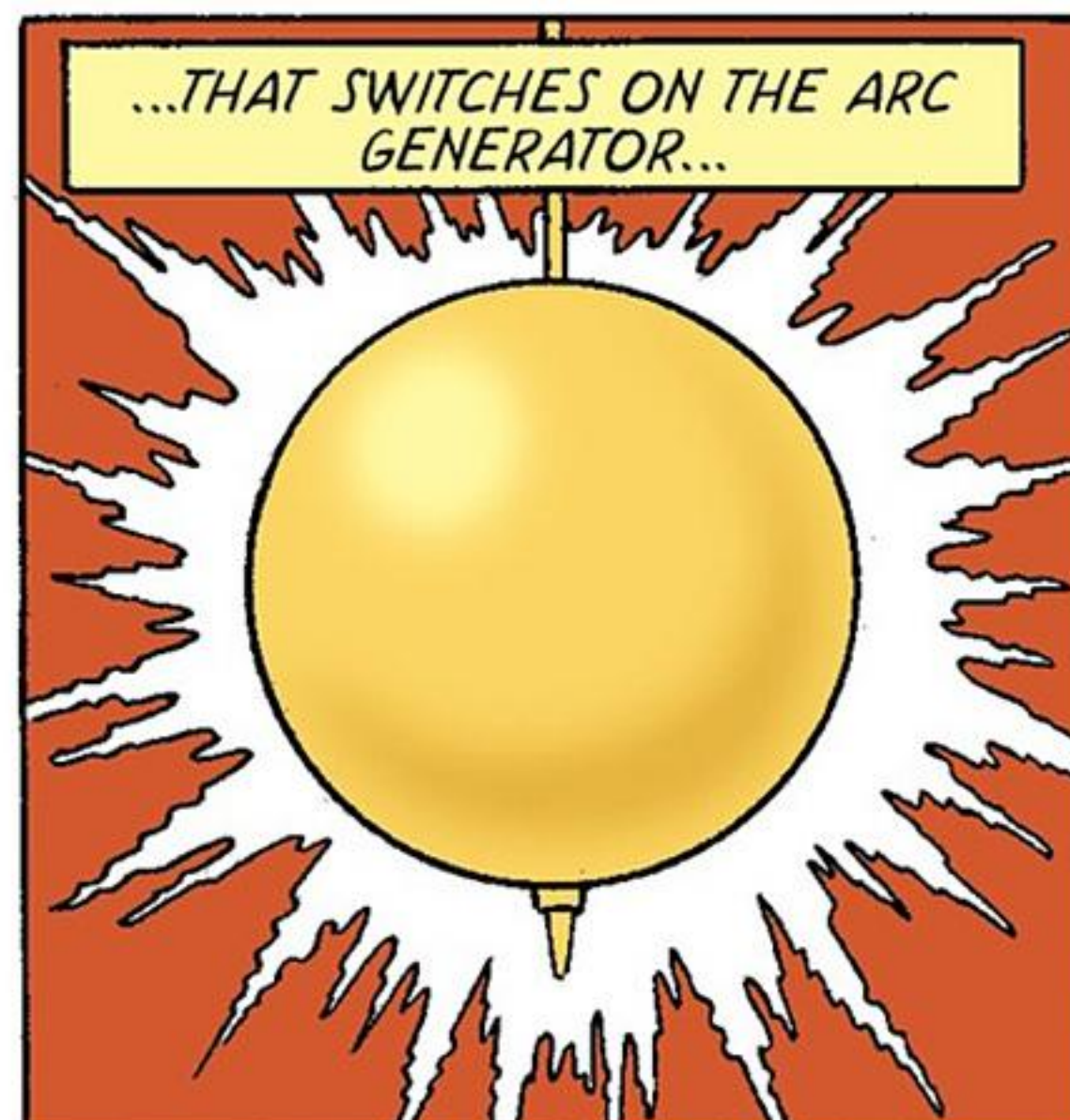
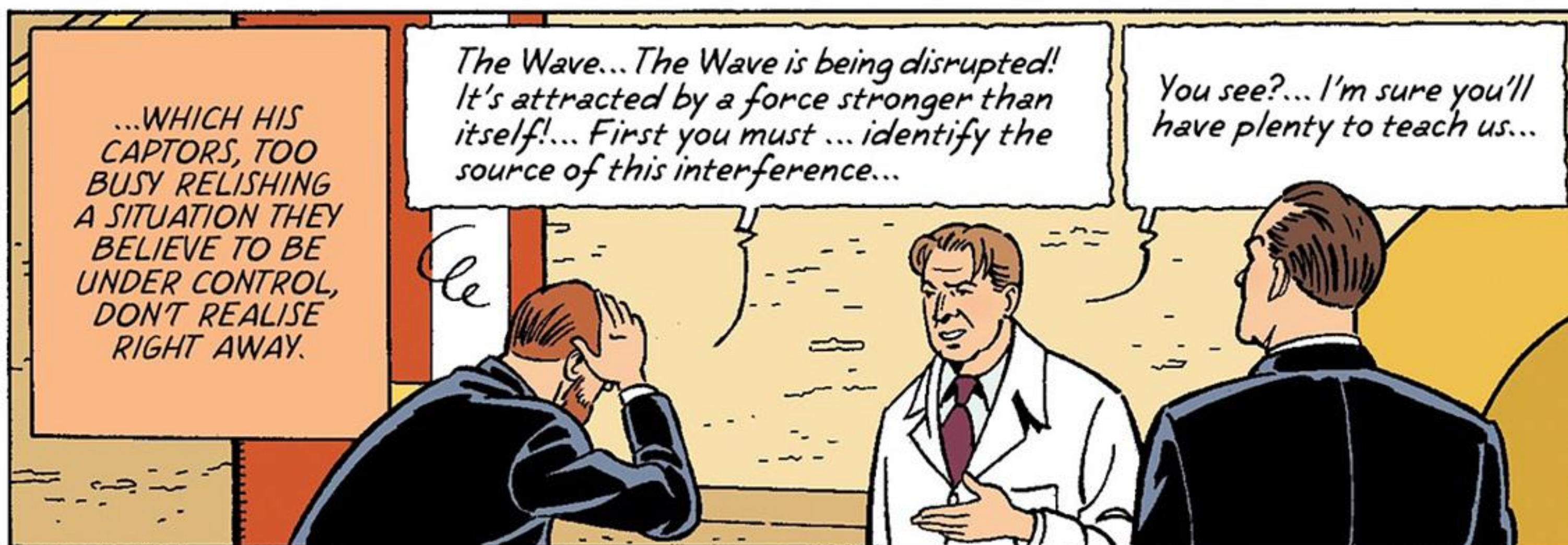
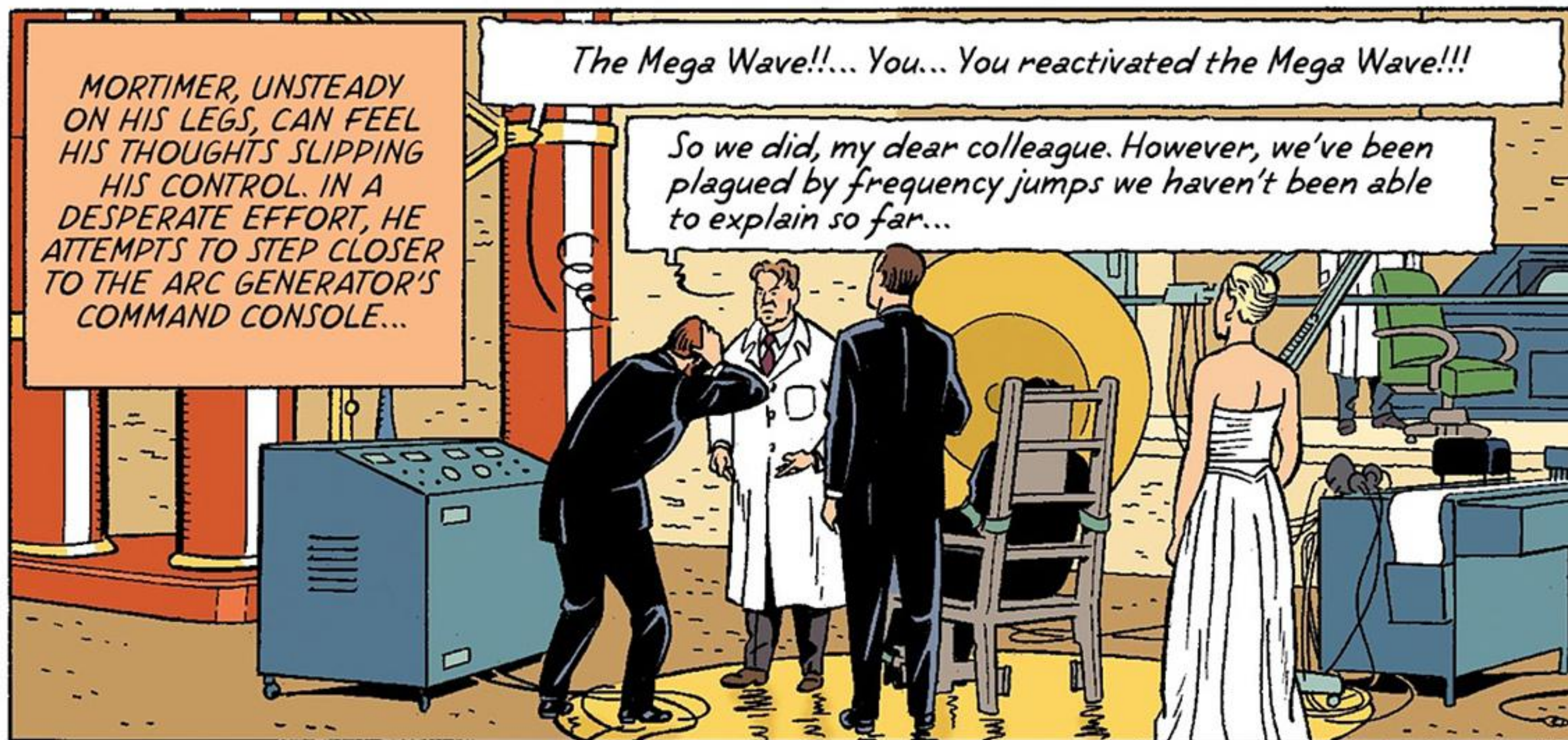
...CHARGING IT WITH FANTASTIC AMOUNTS OF ENERGY!

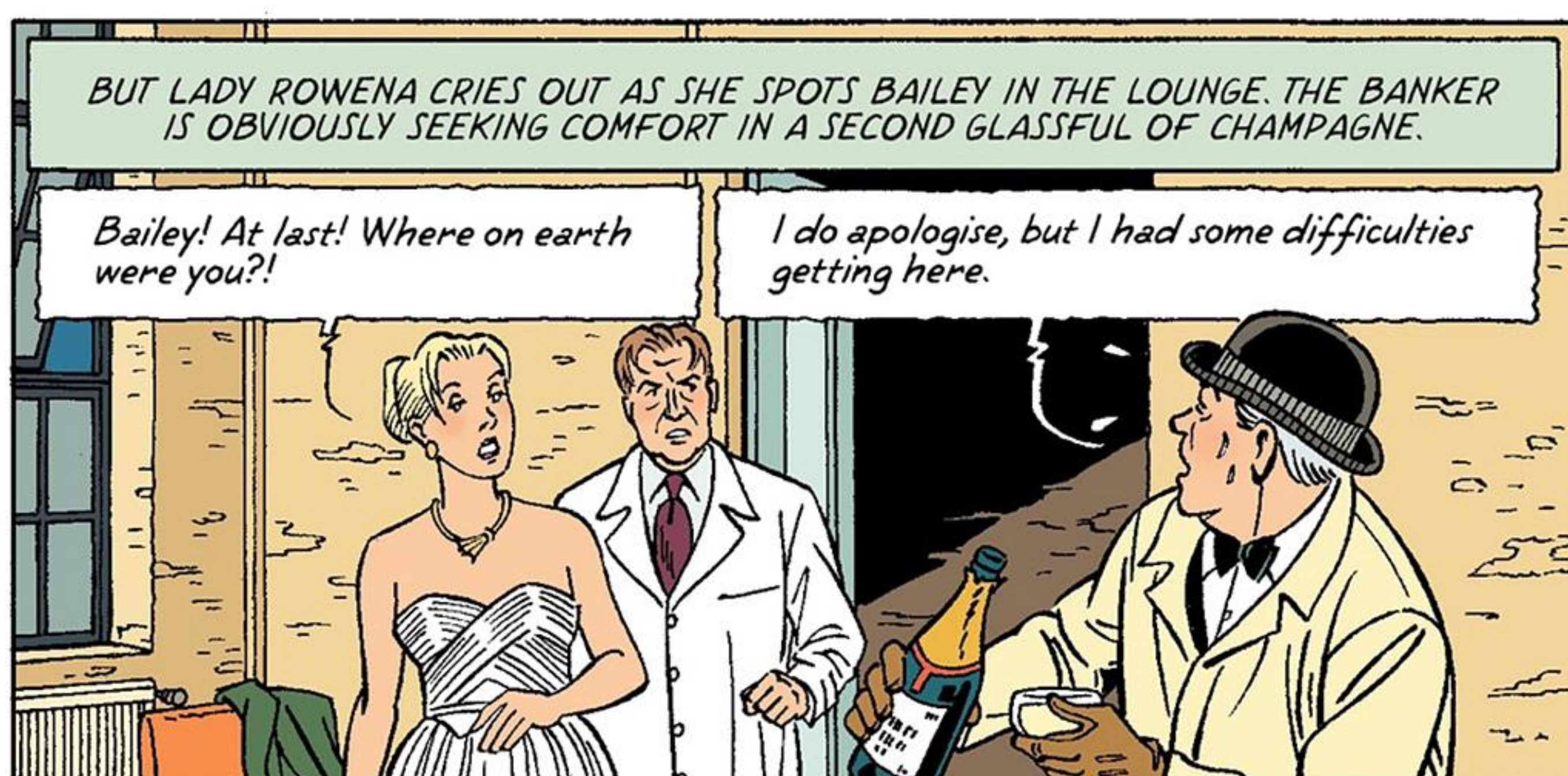
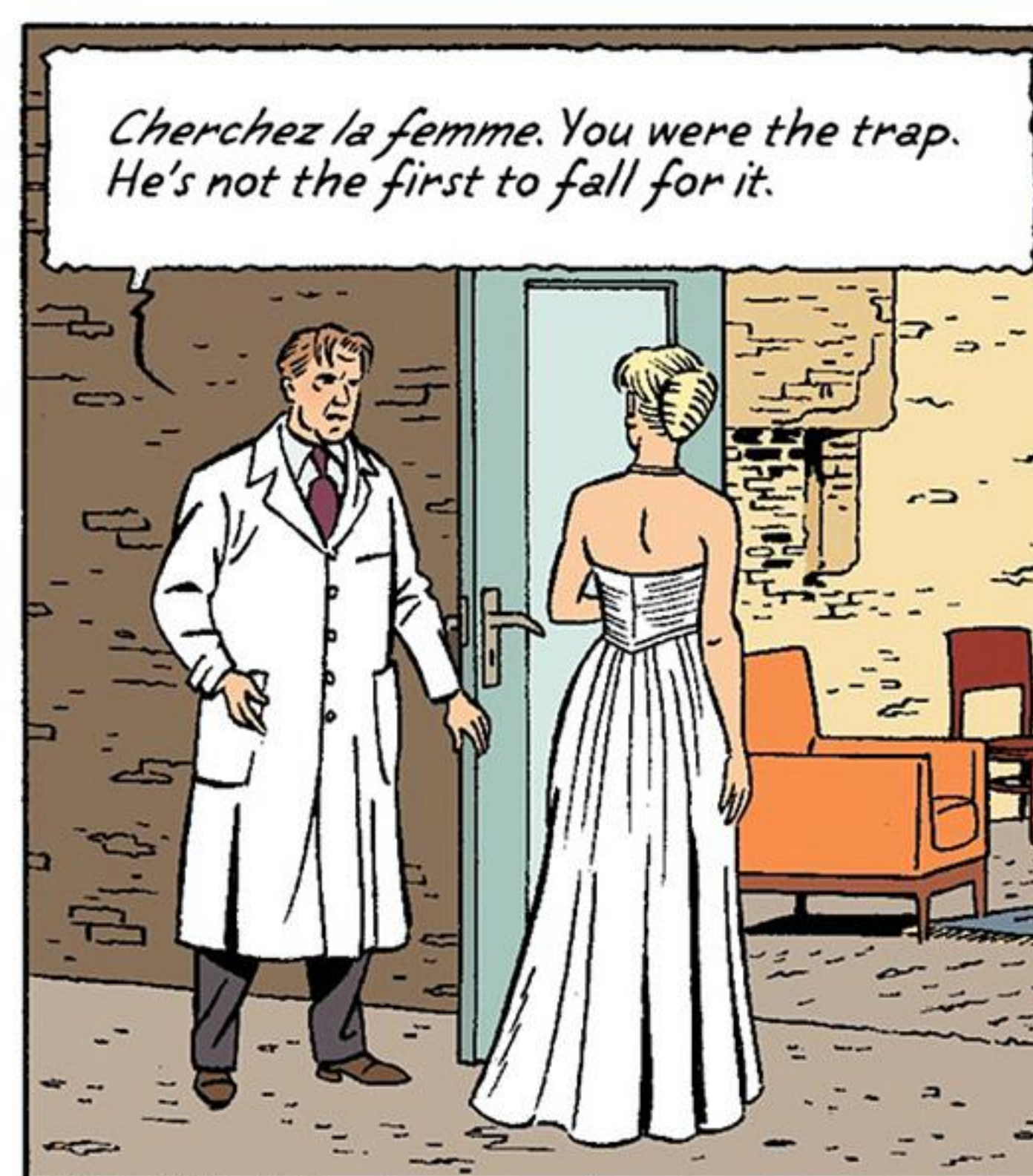
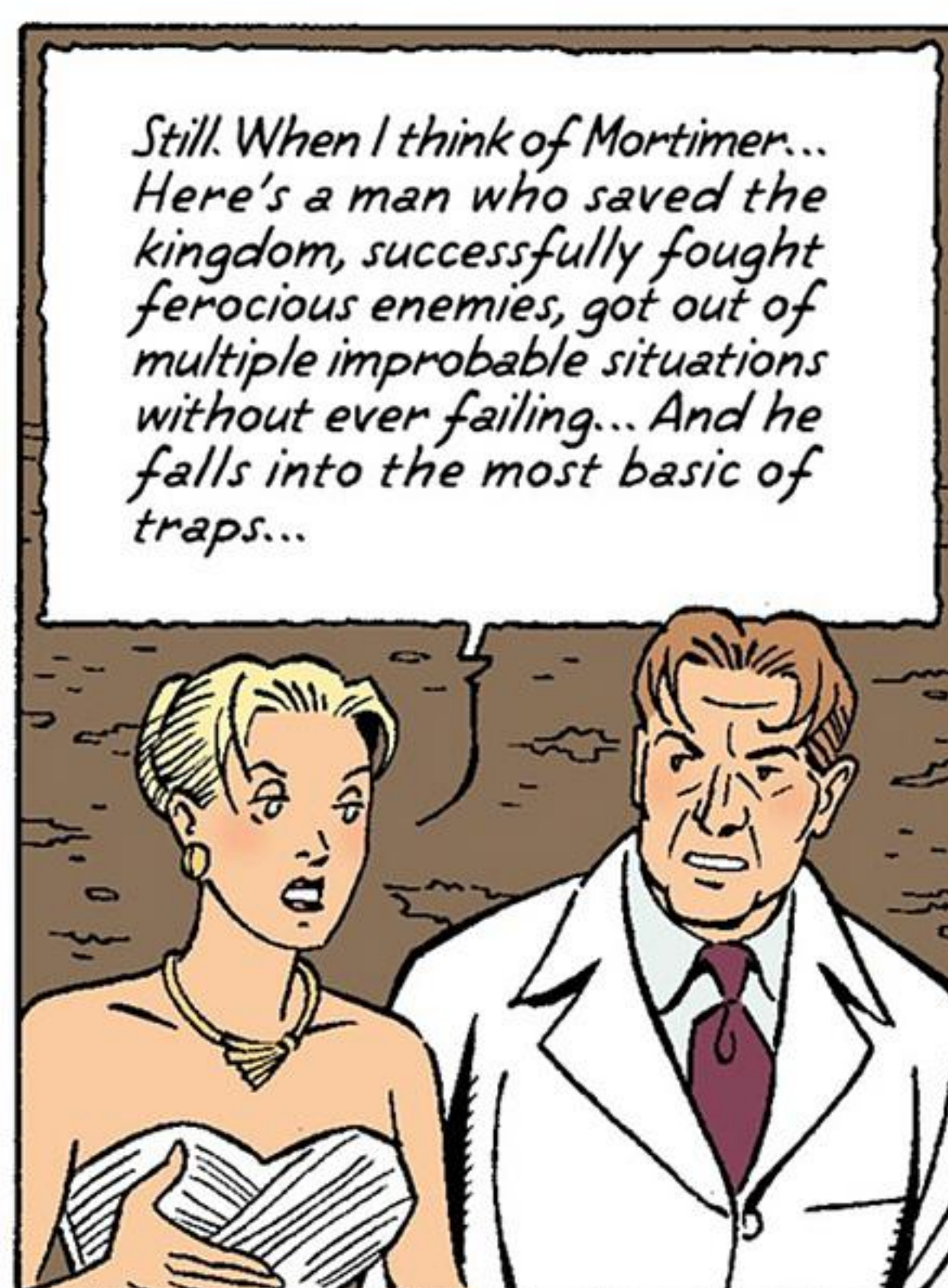
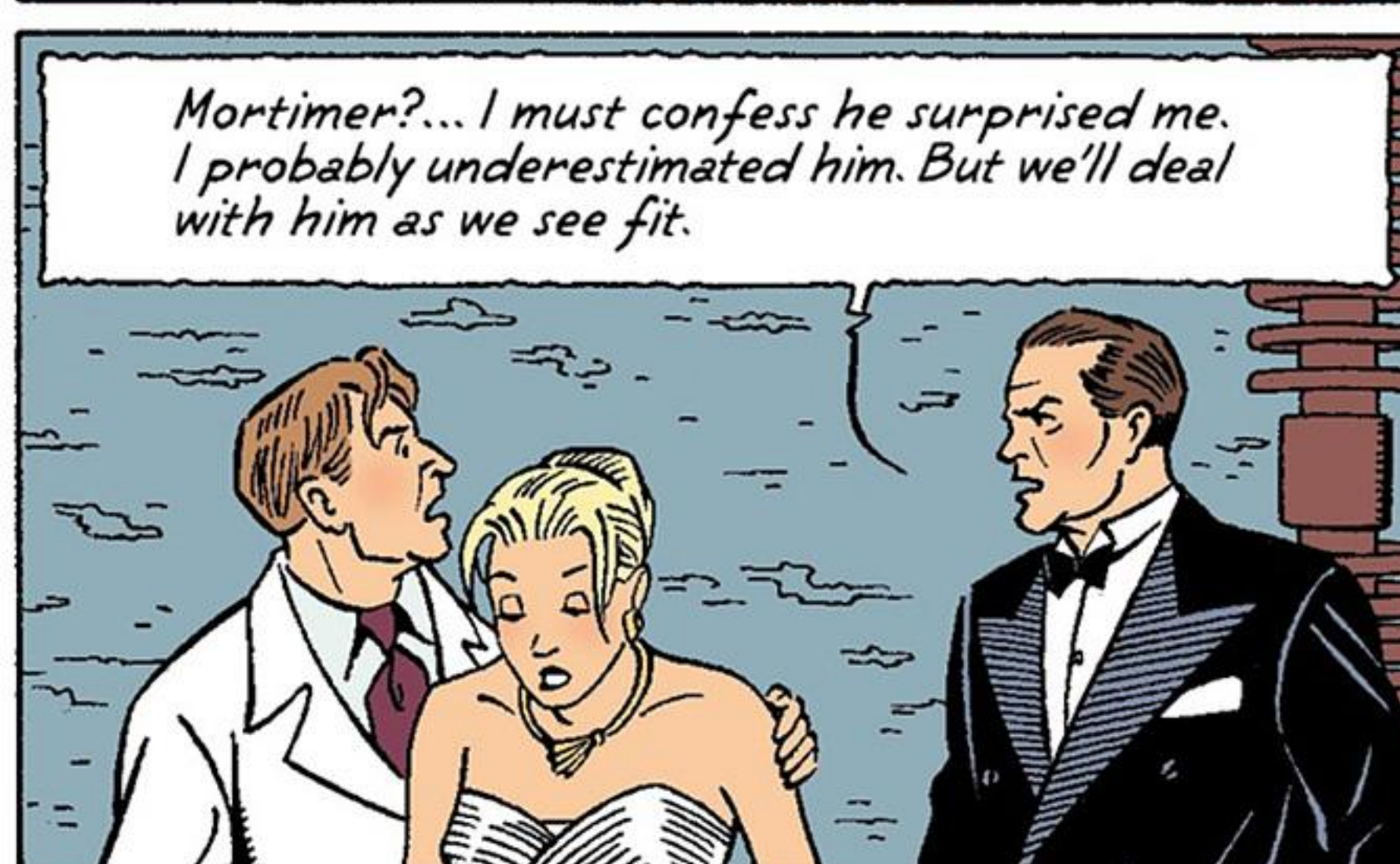
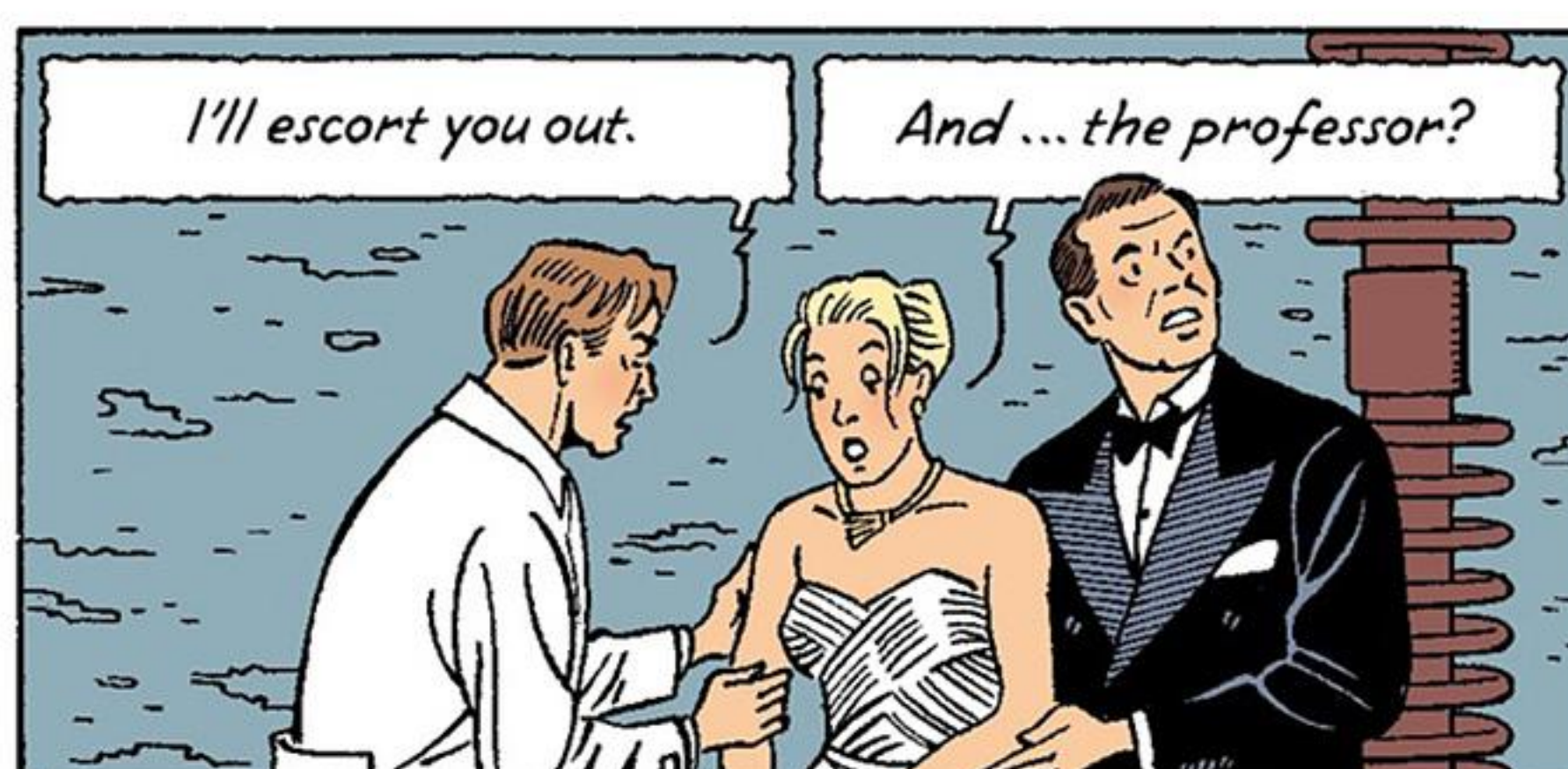
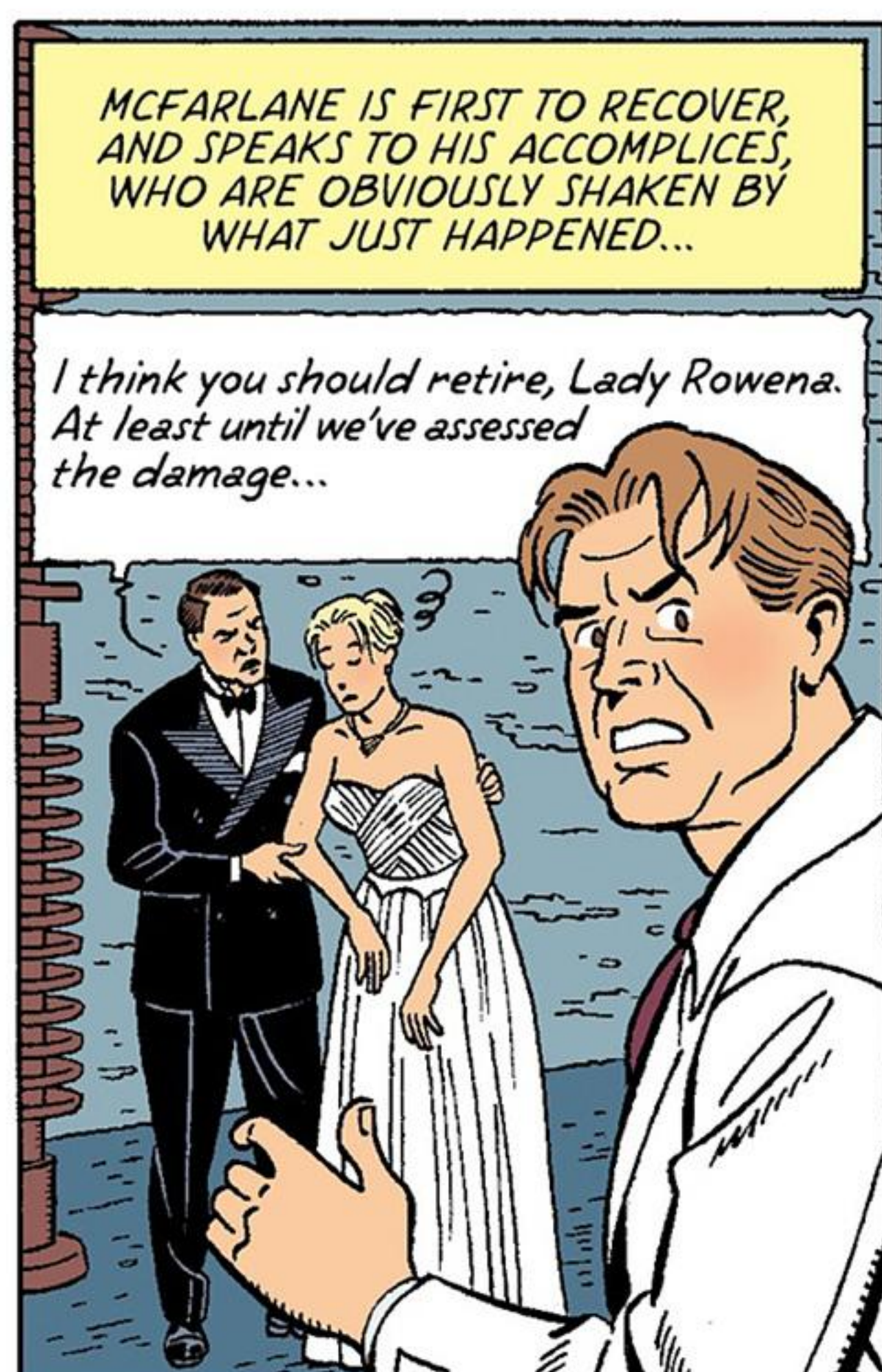
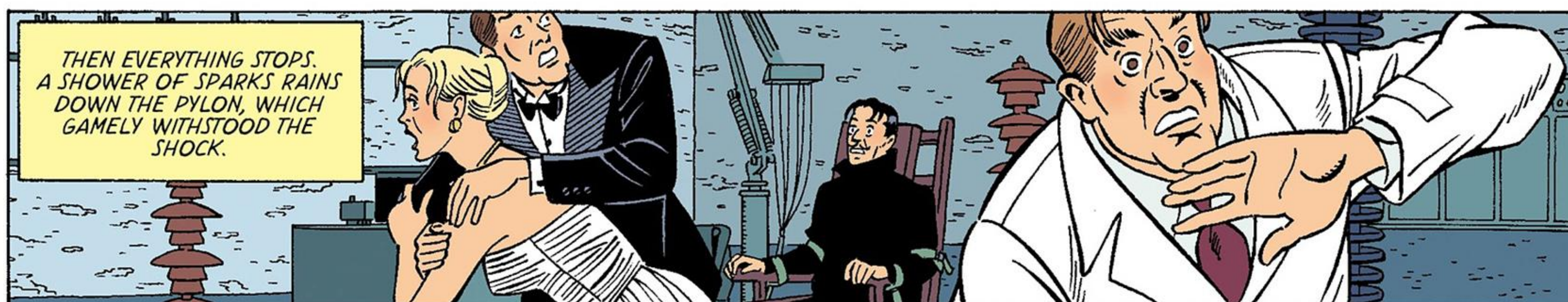


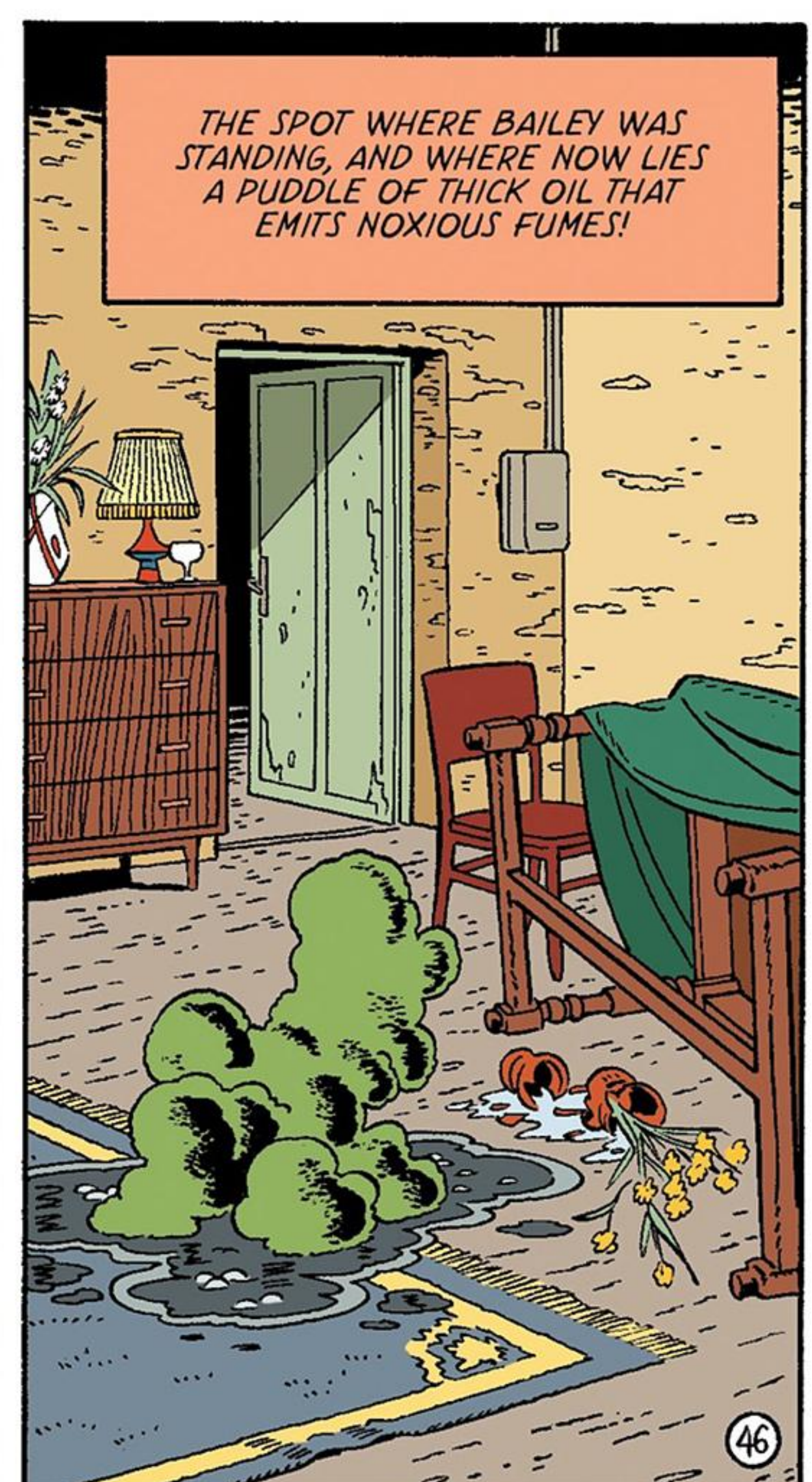
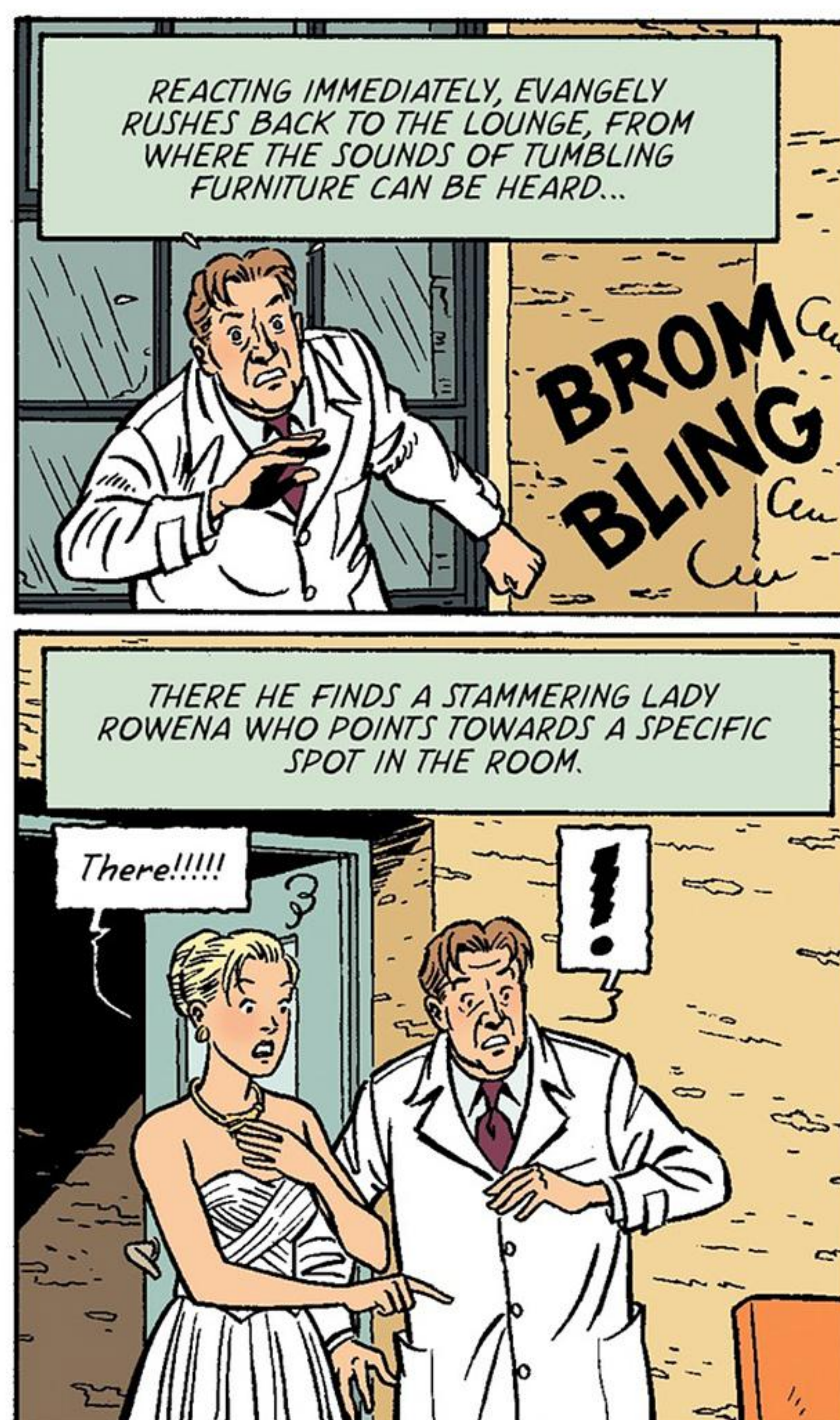
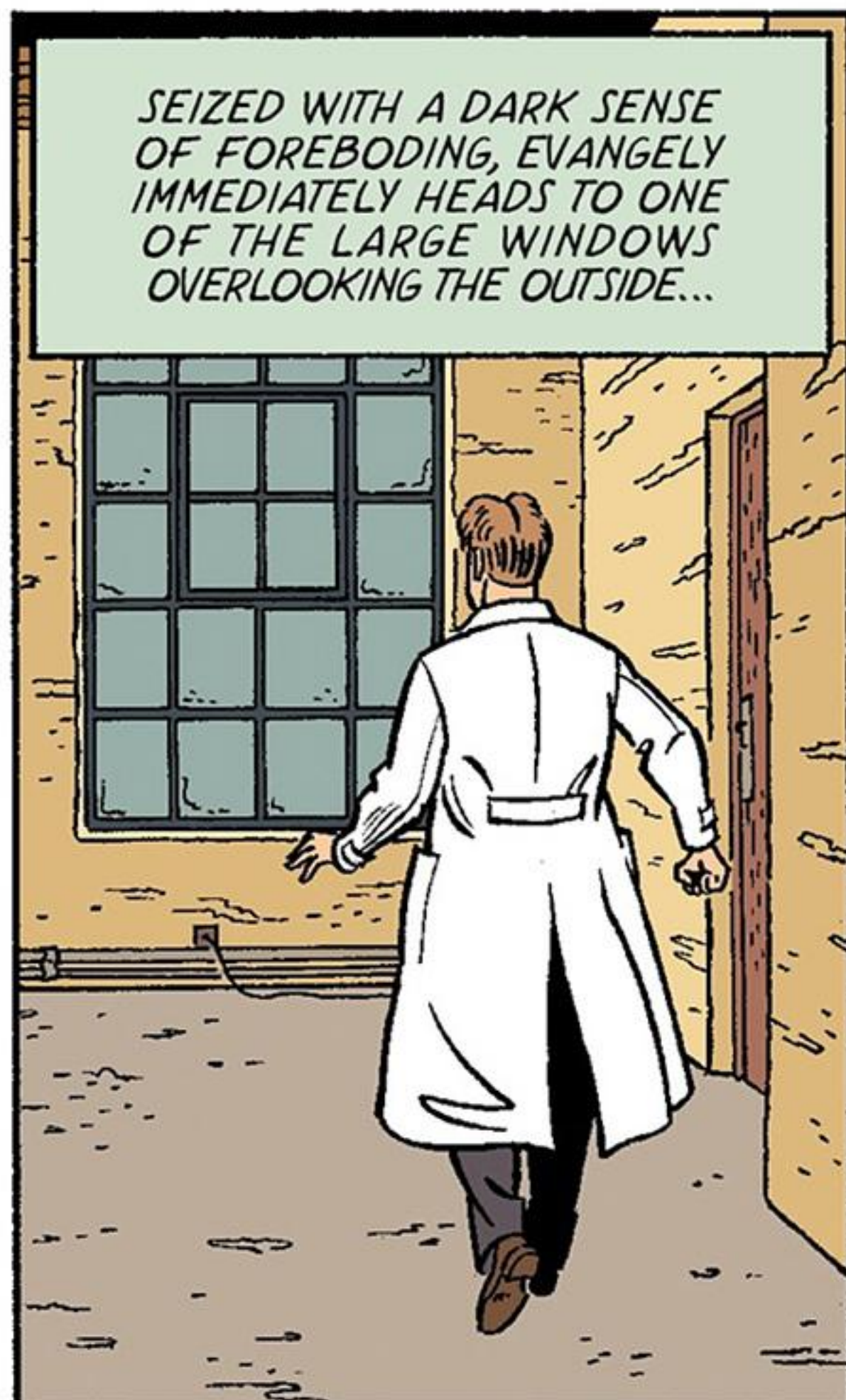
*SEE THE YELLOW M

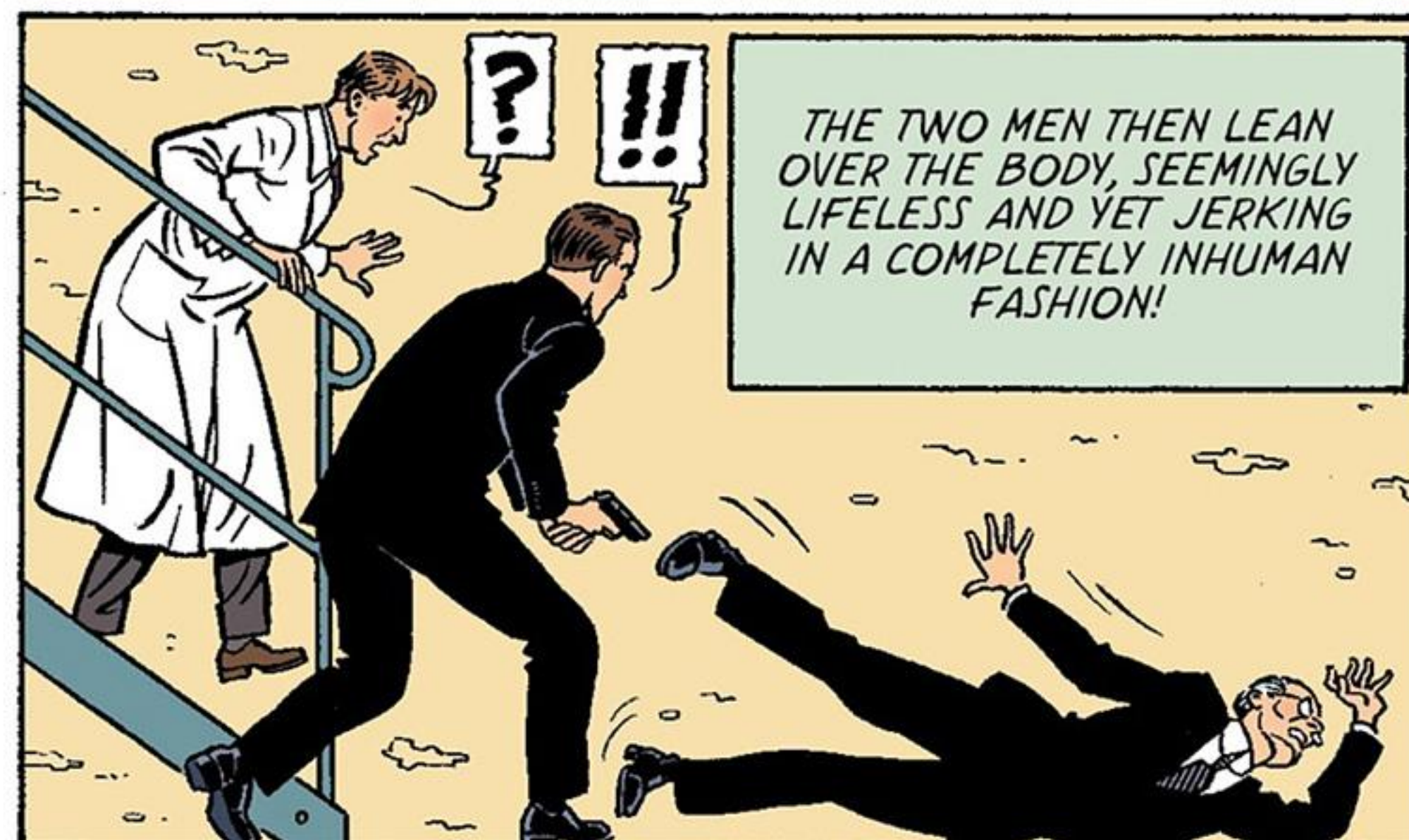
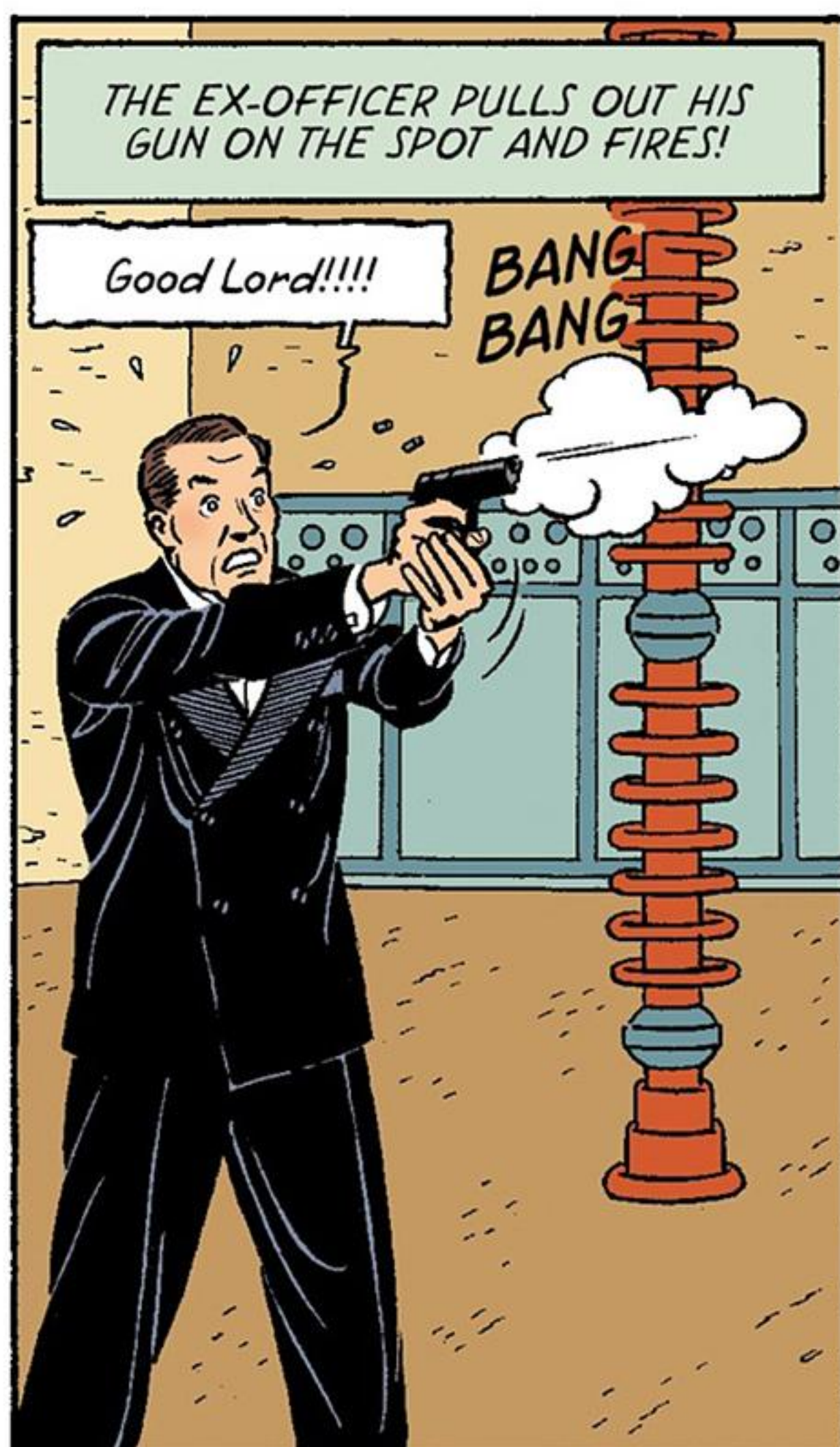
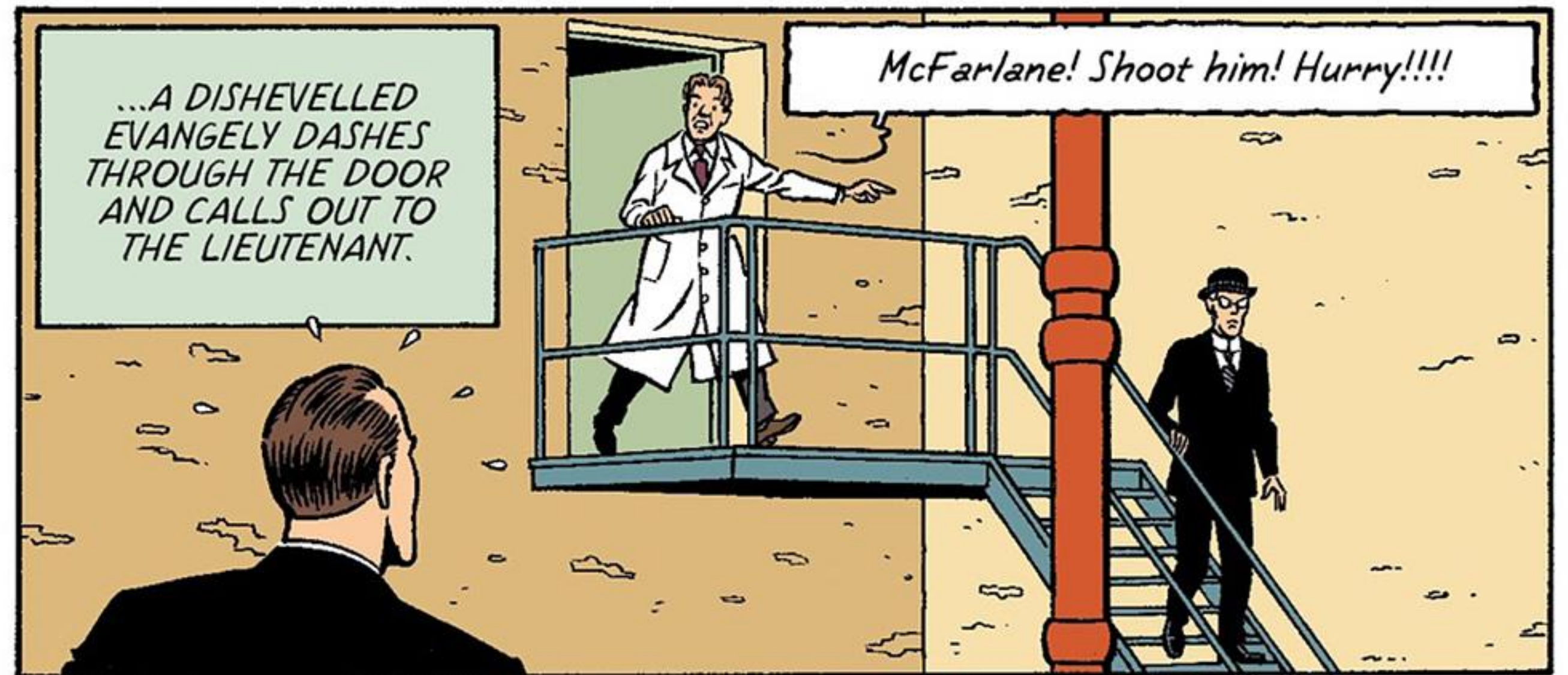
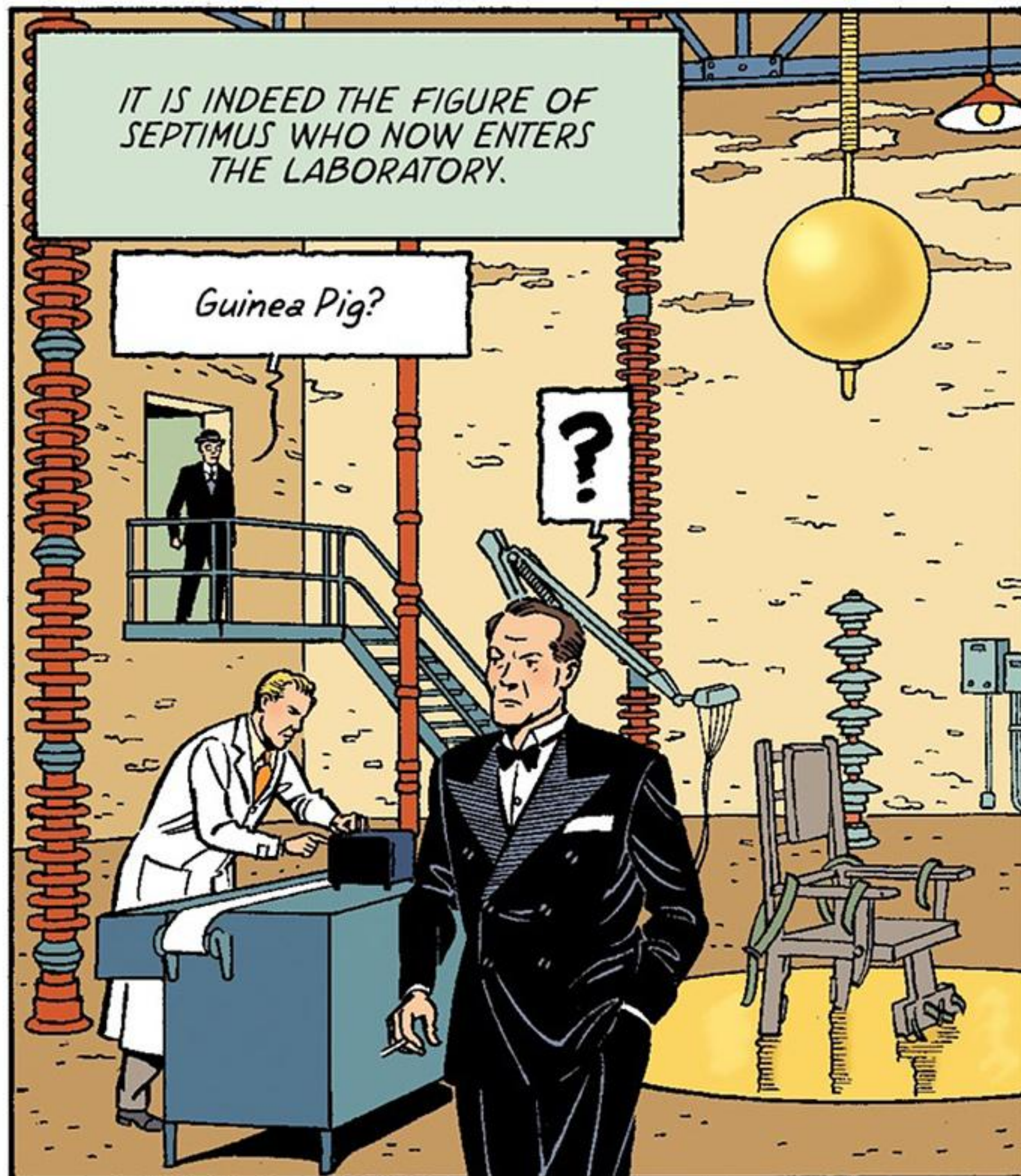
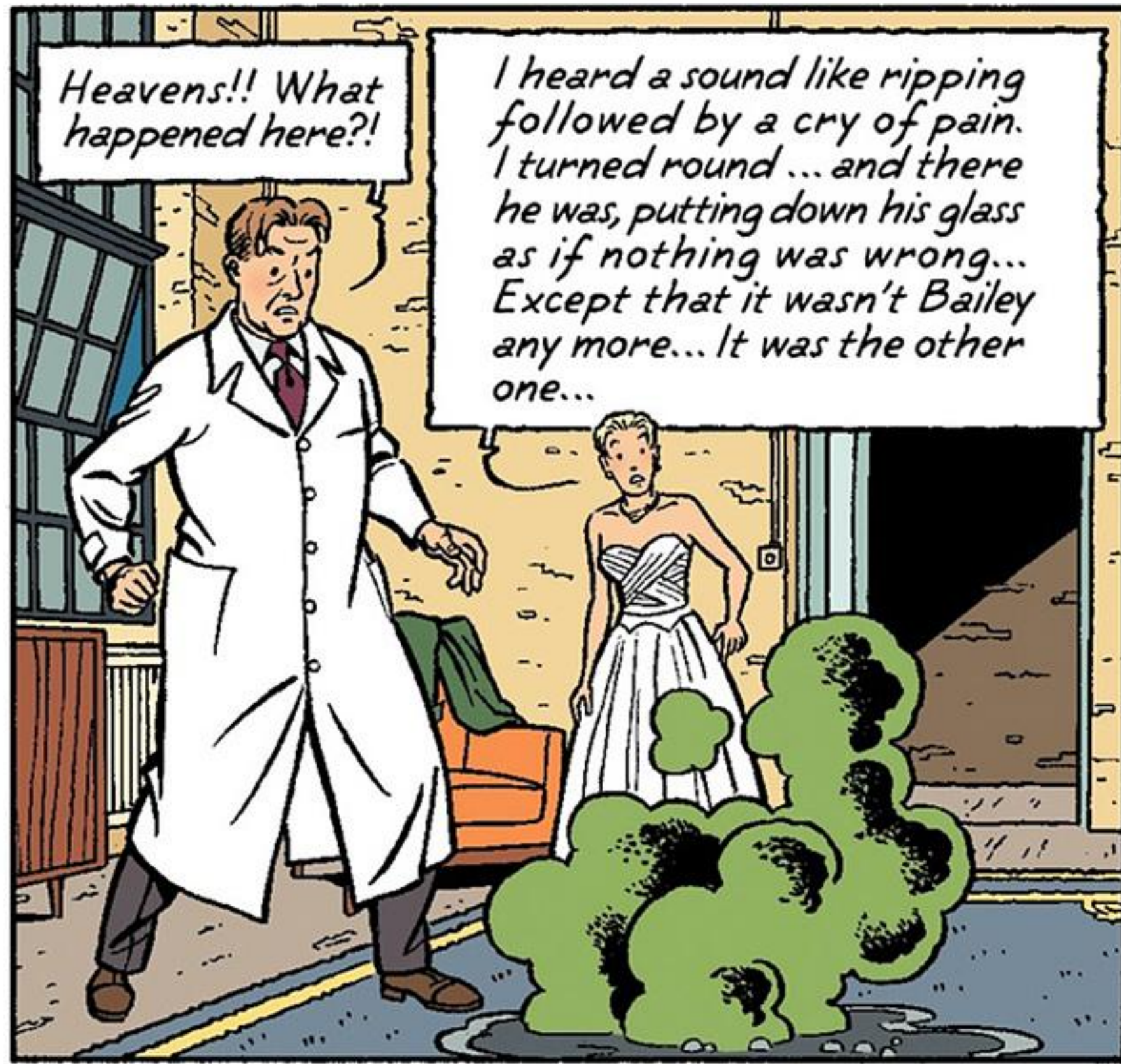


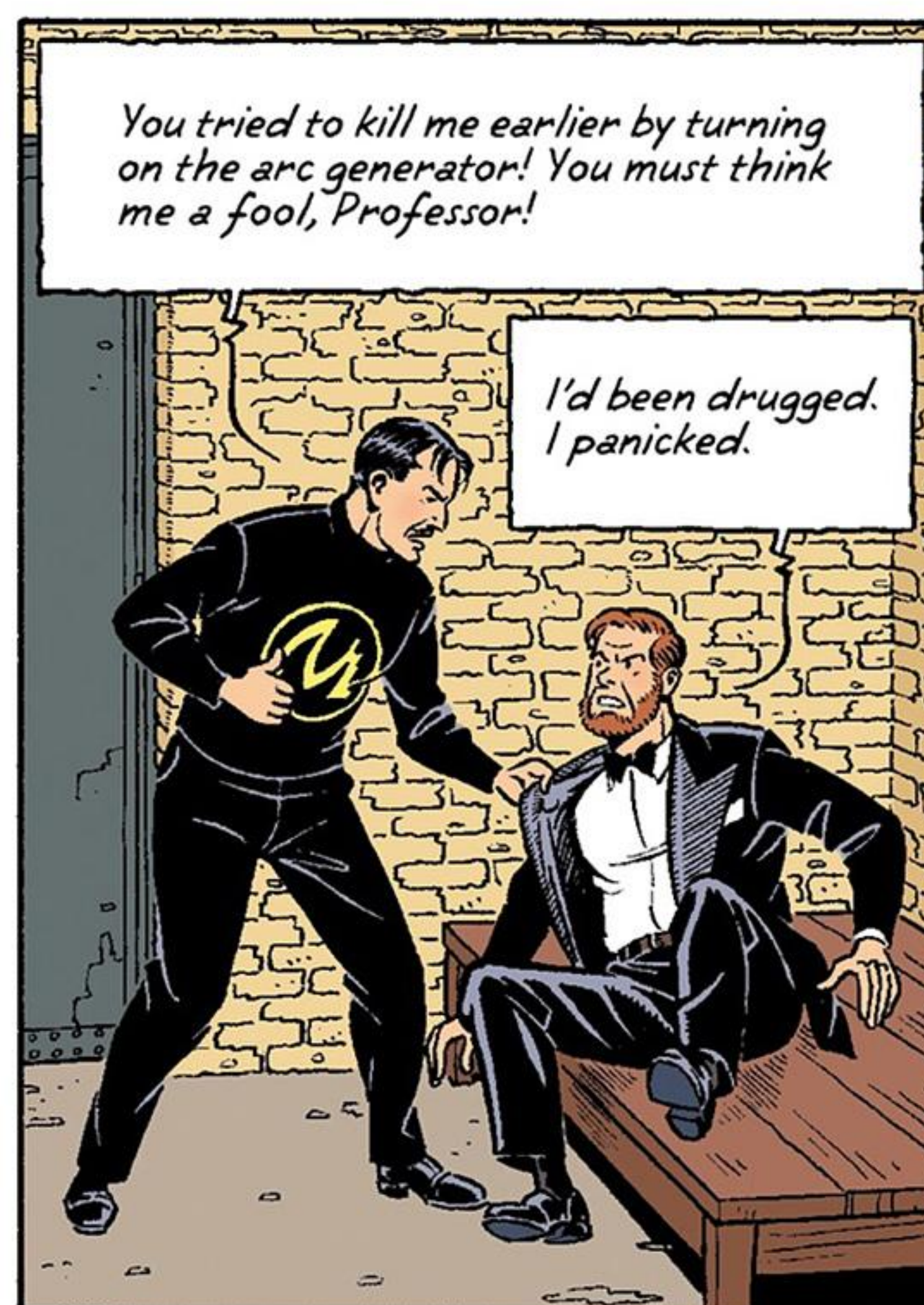
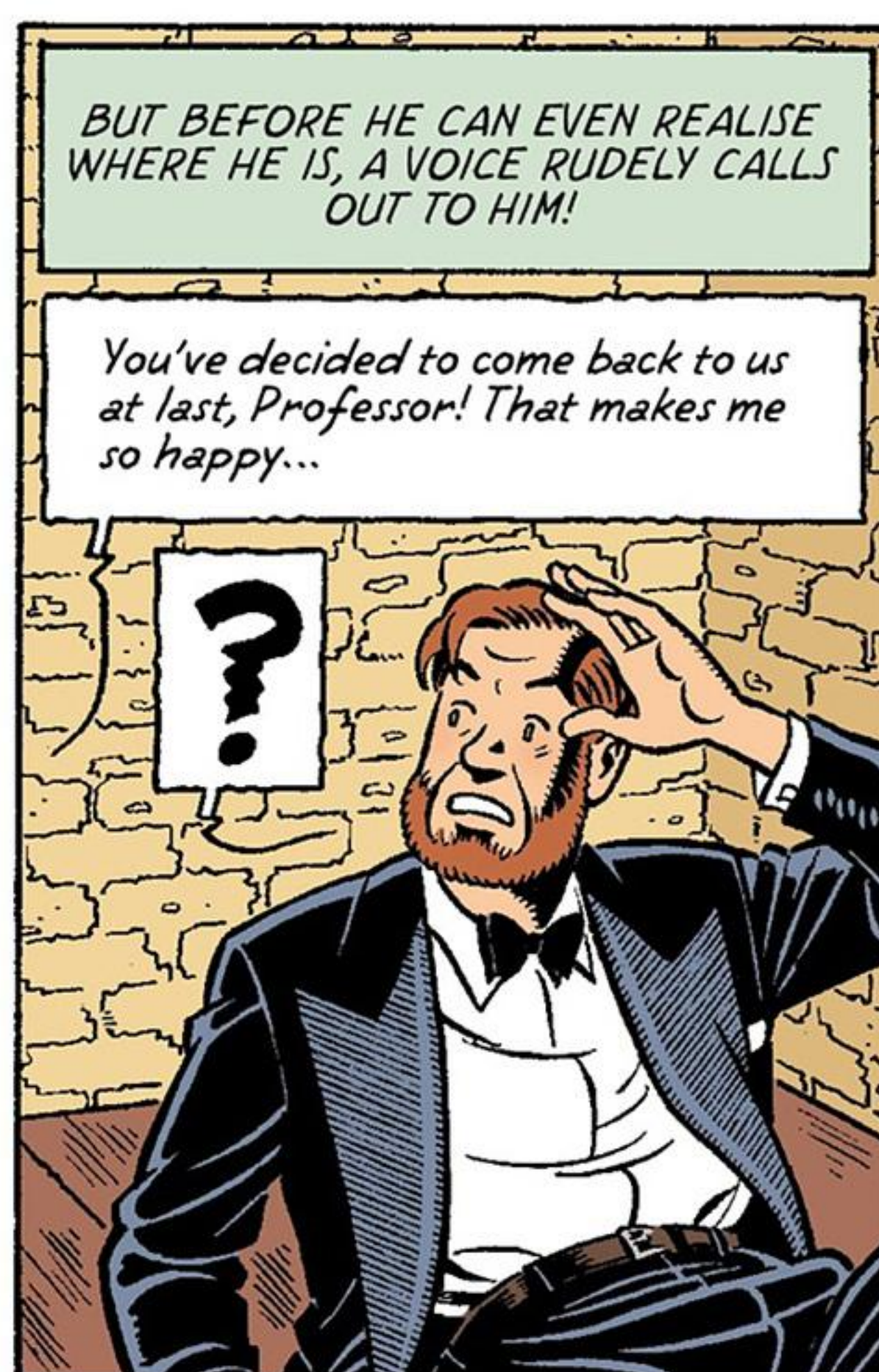
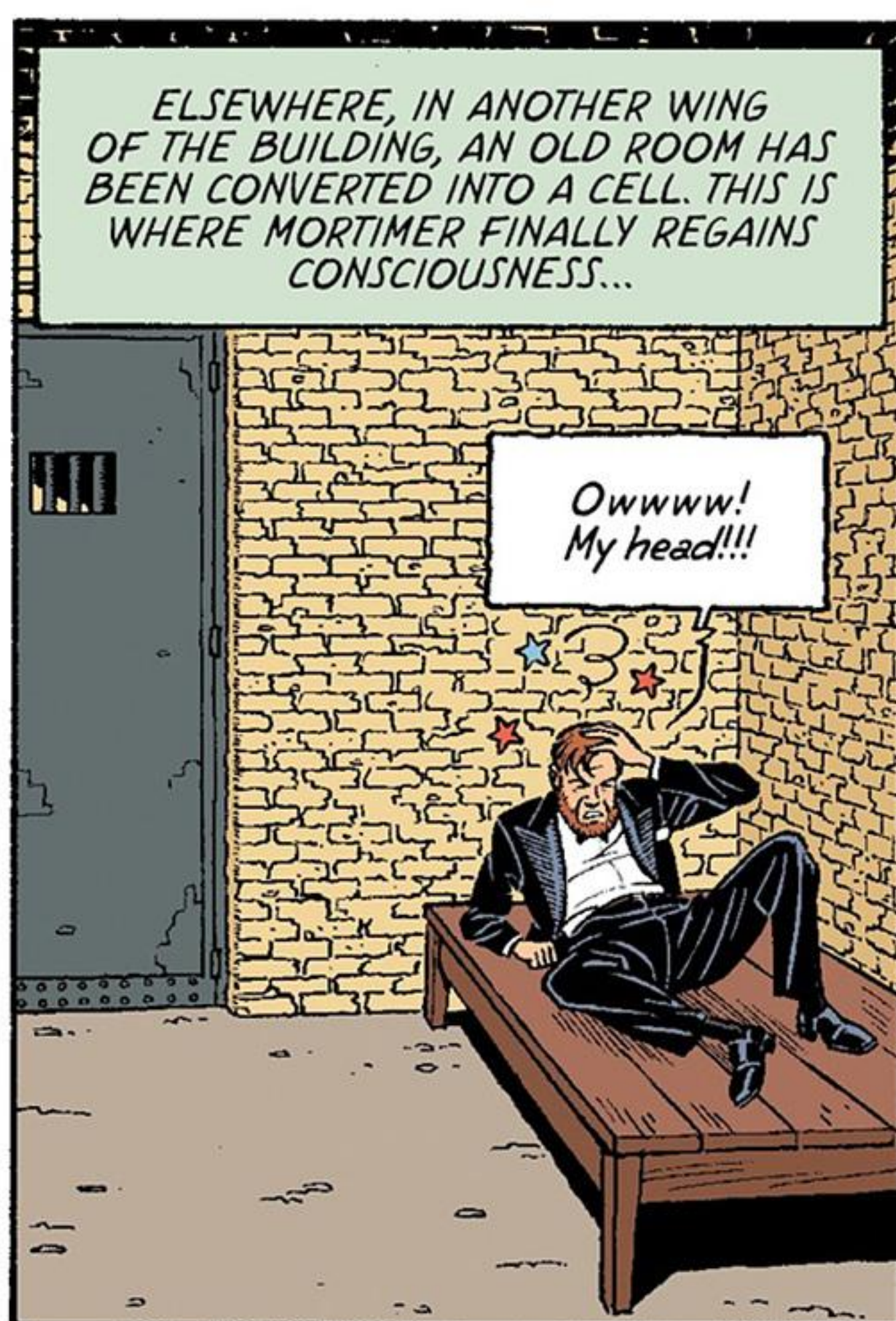


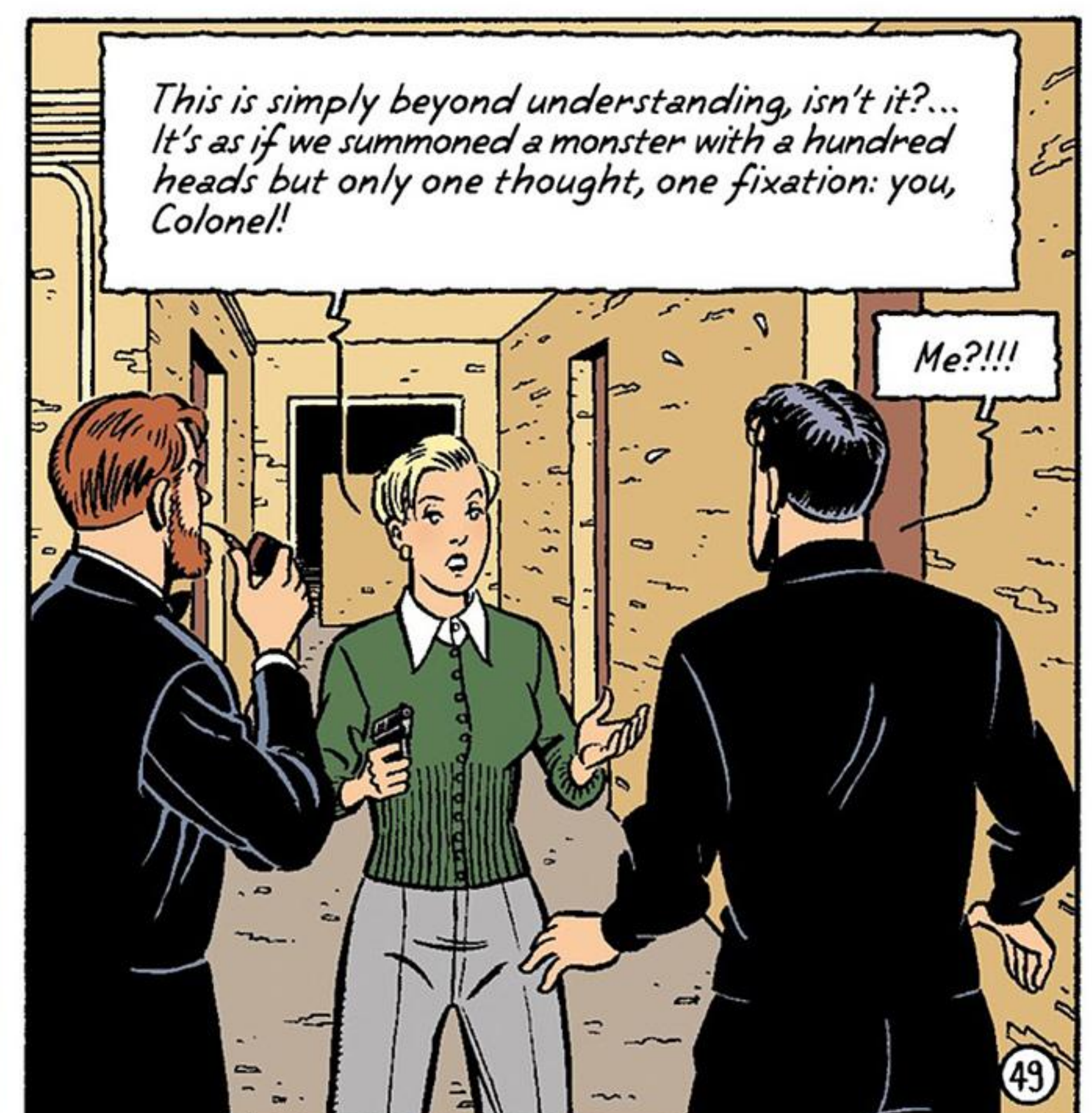
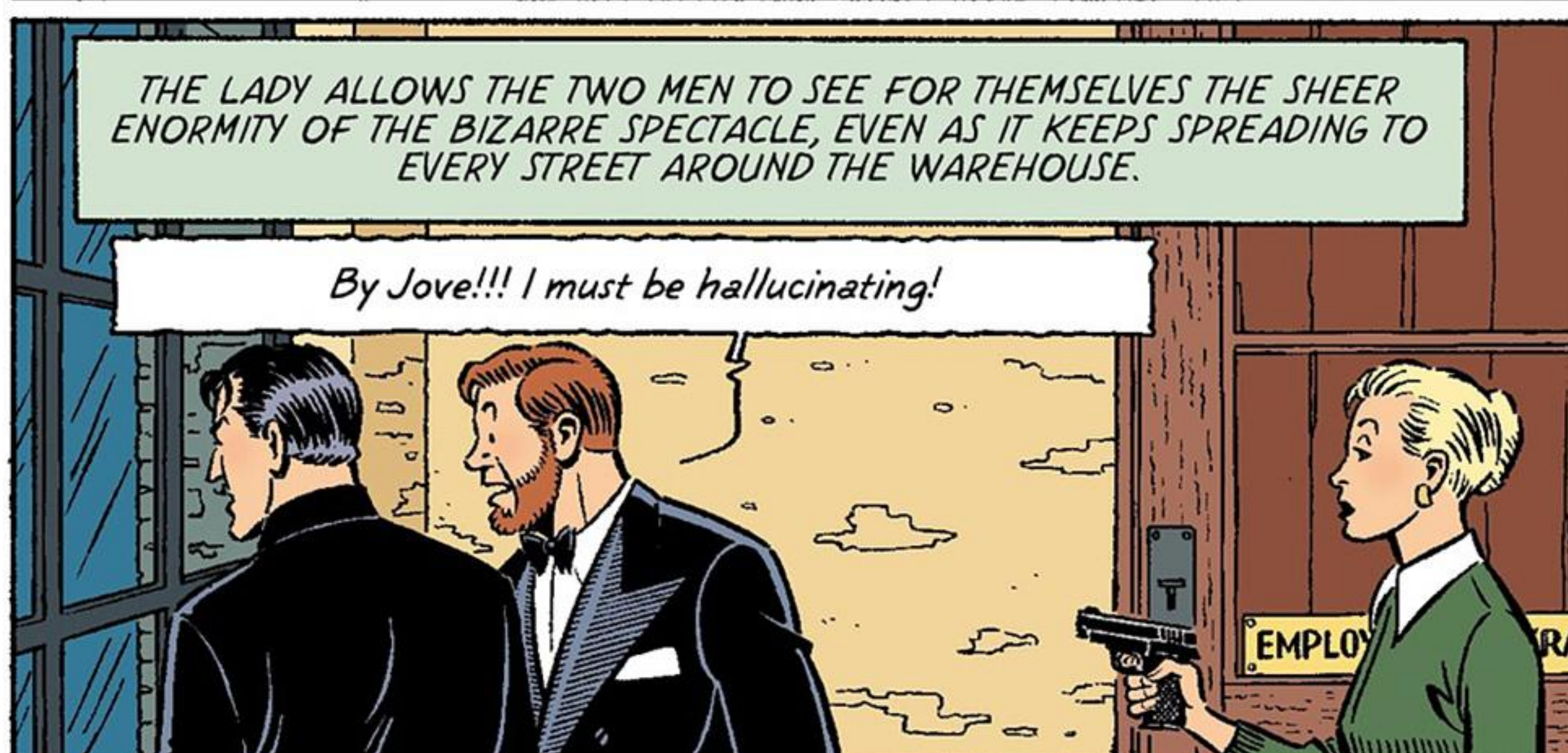
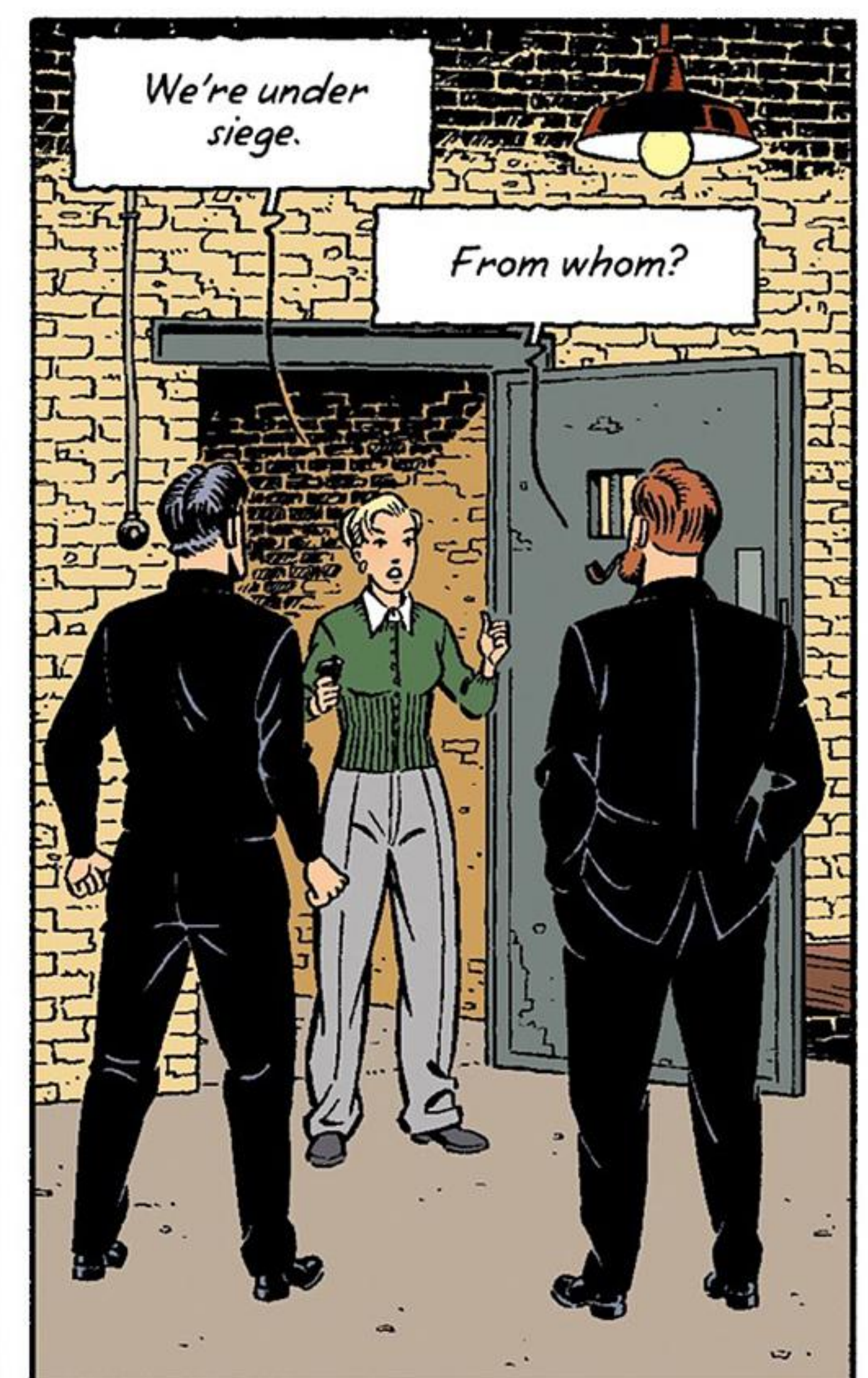
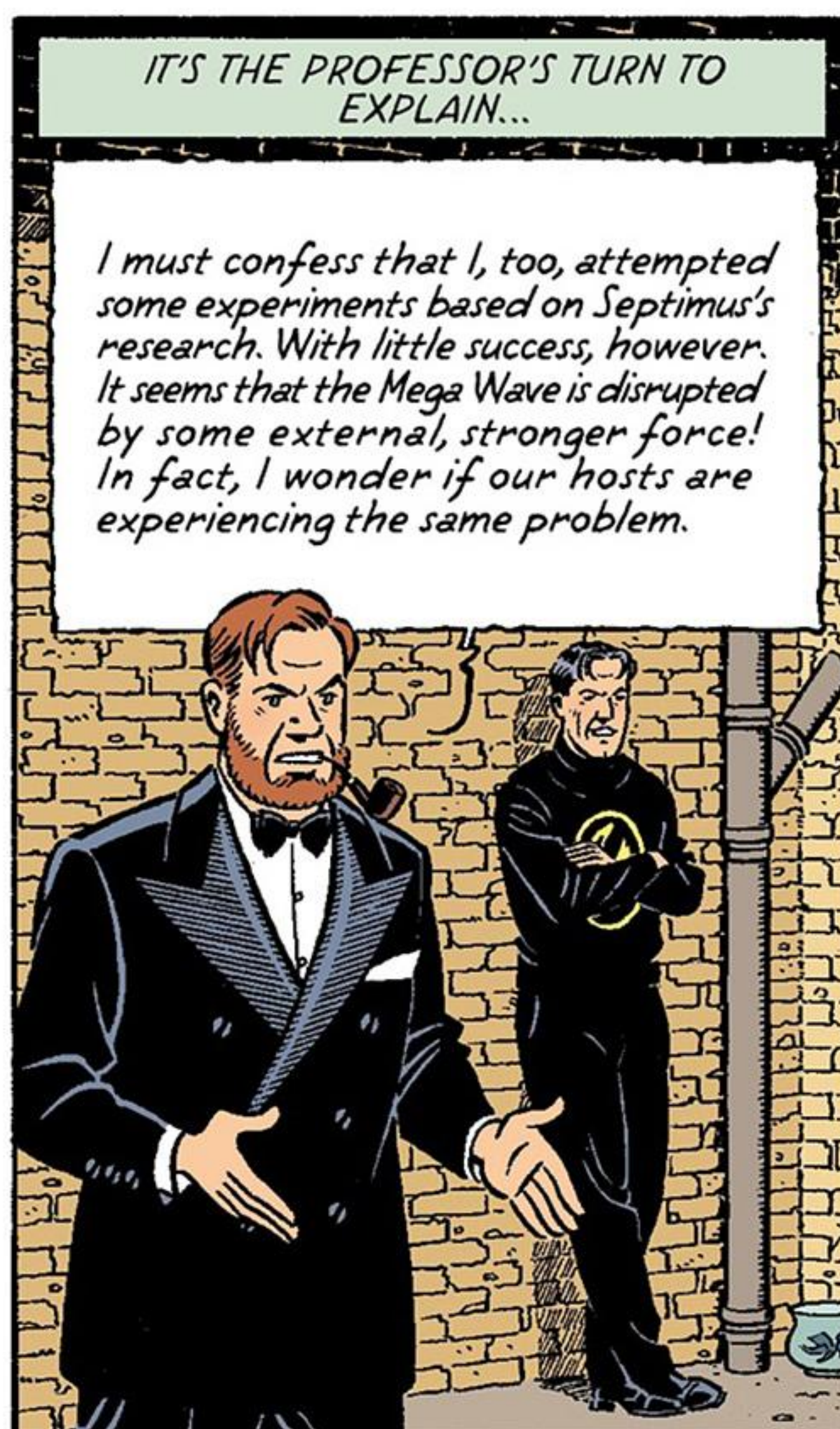
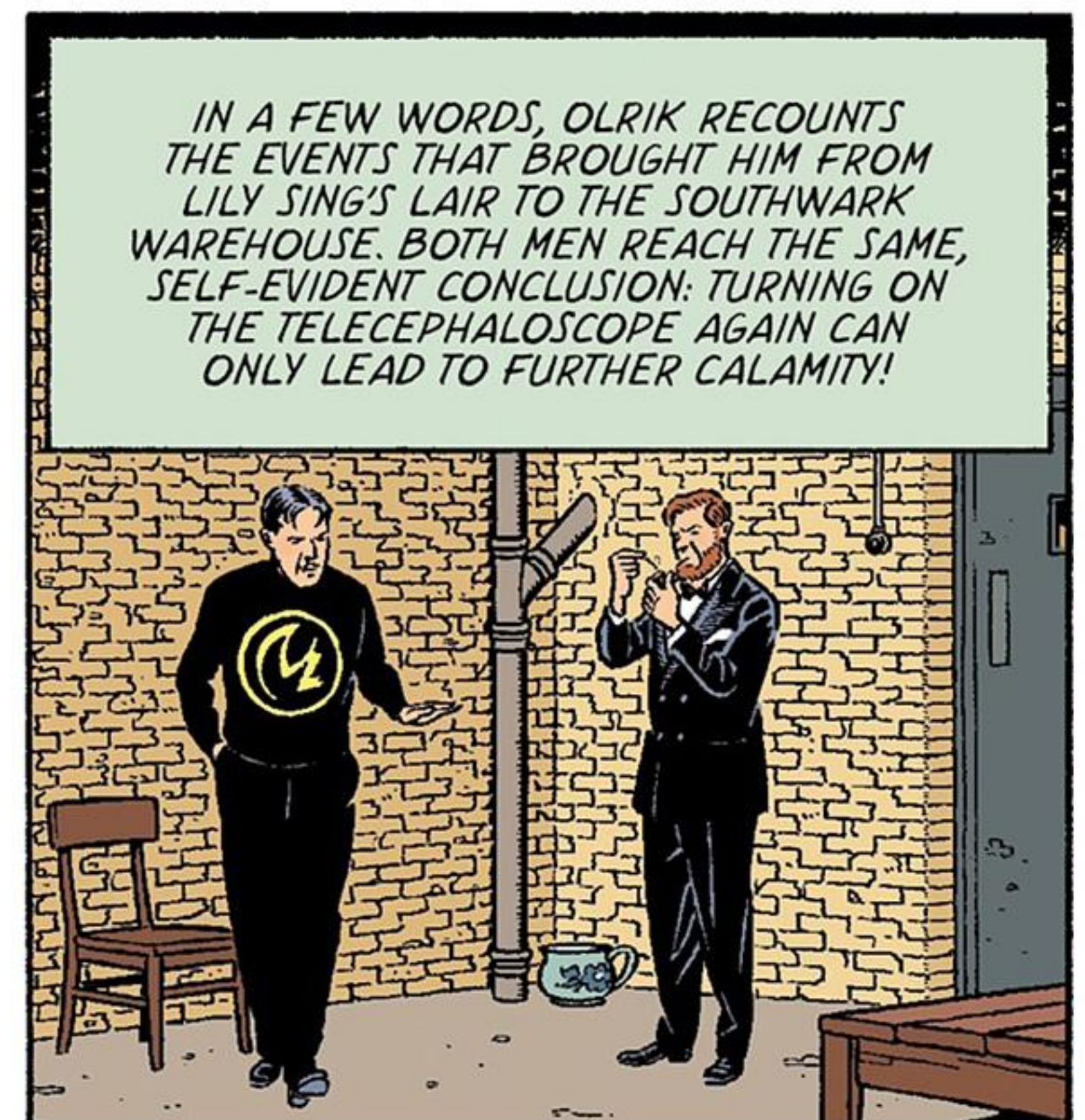
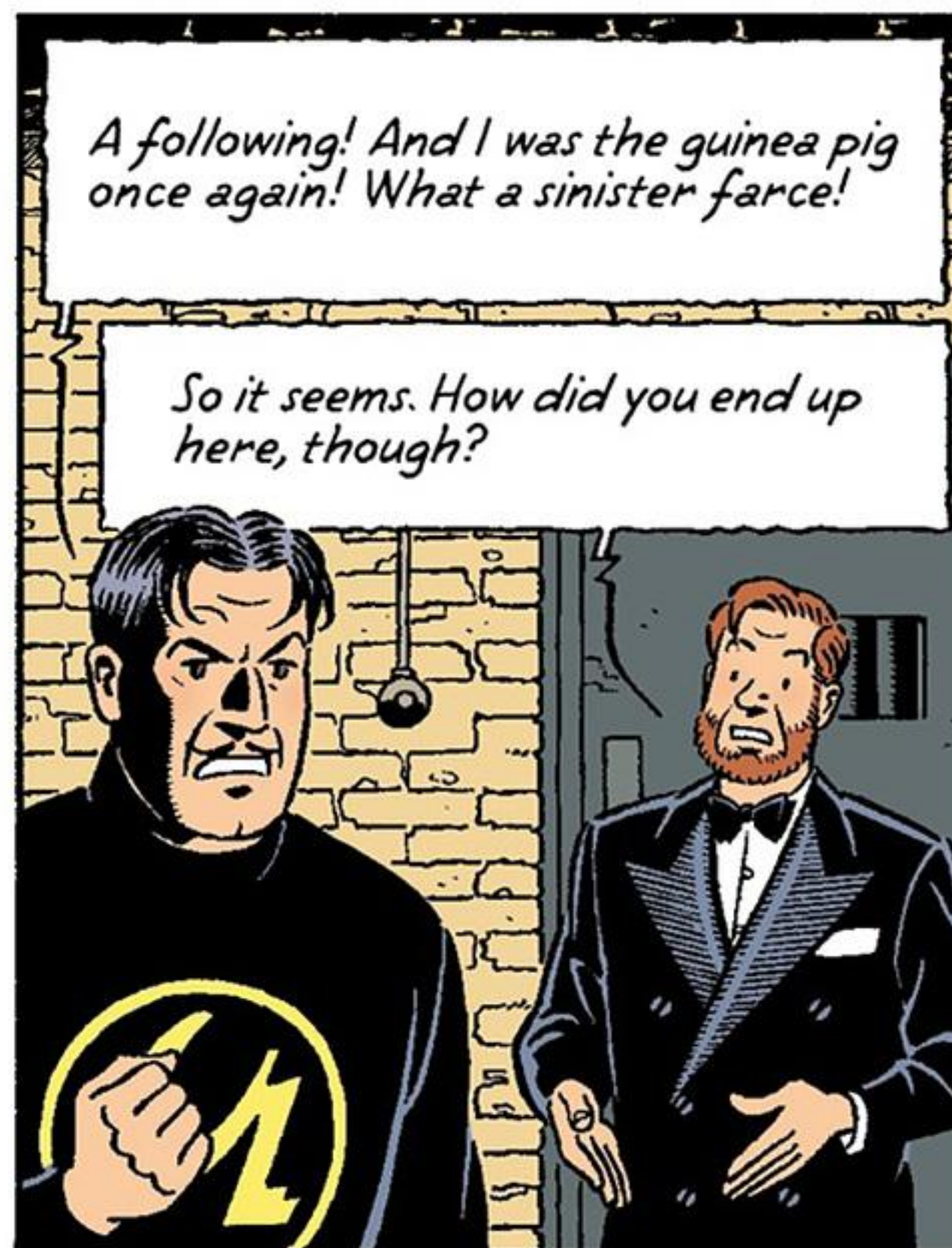
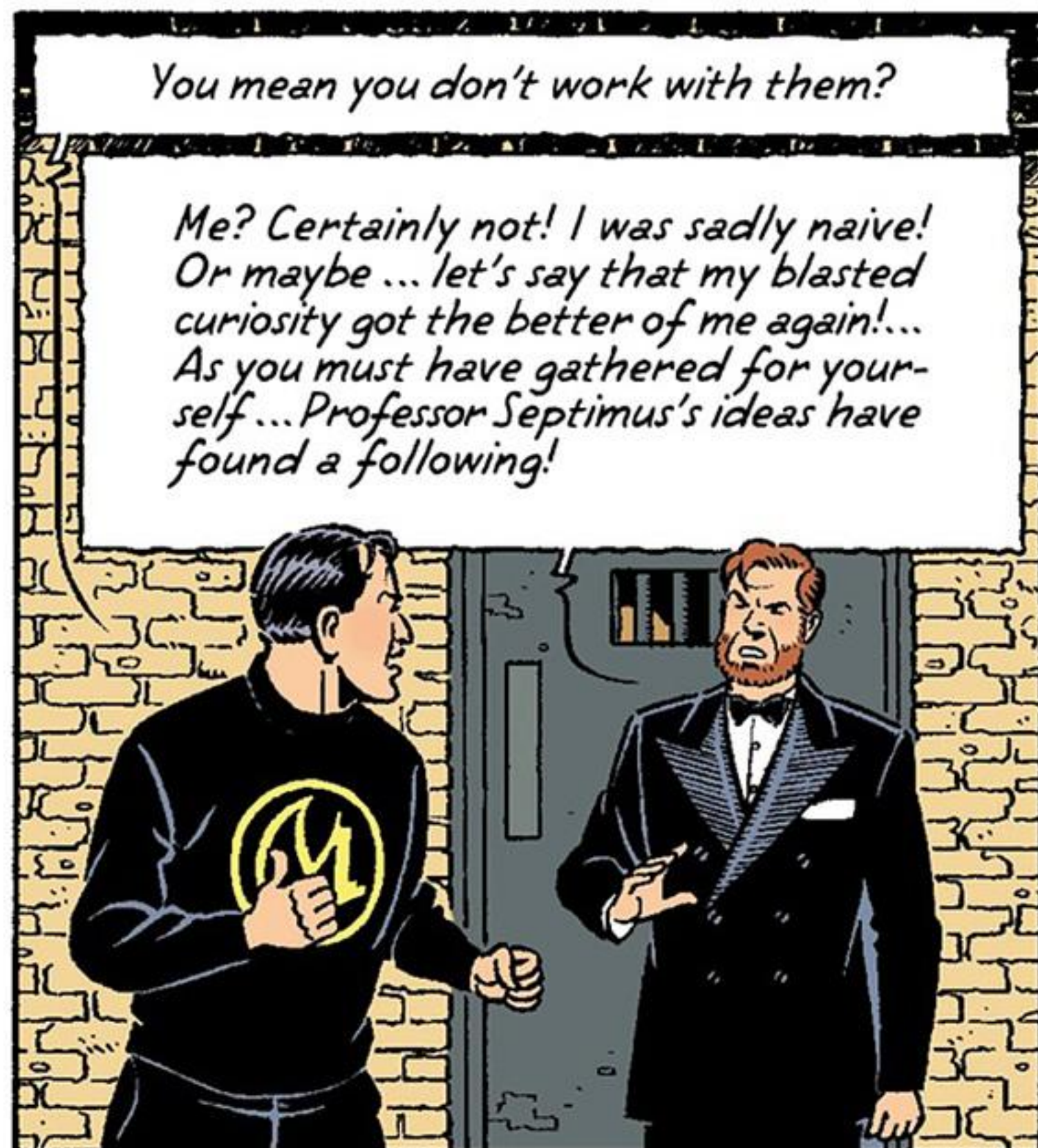


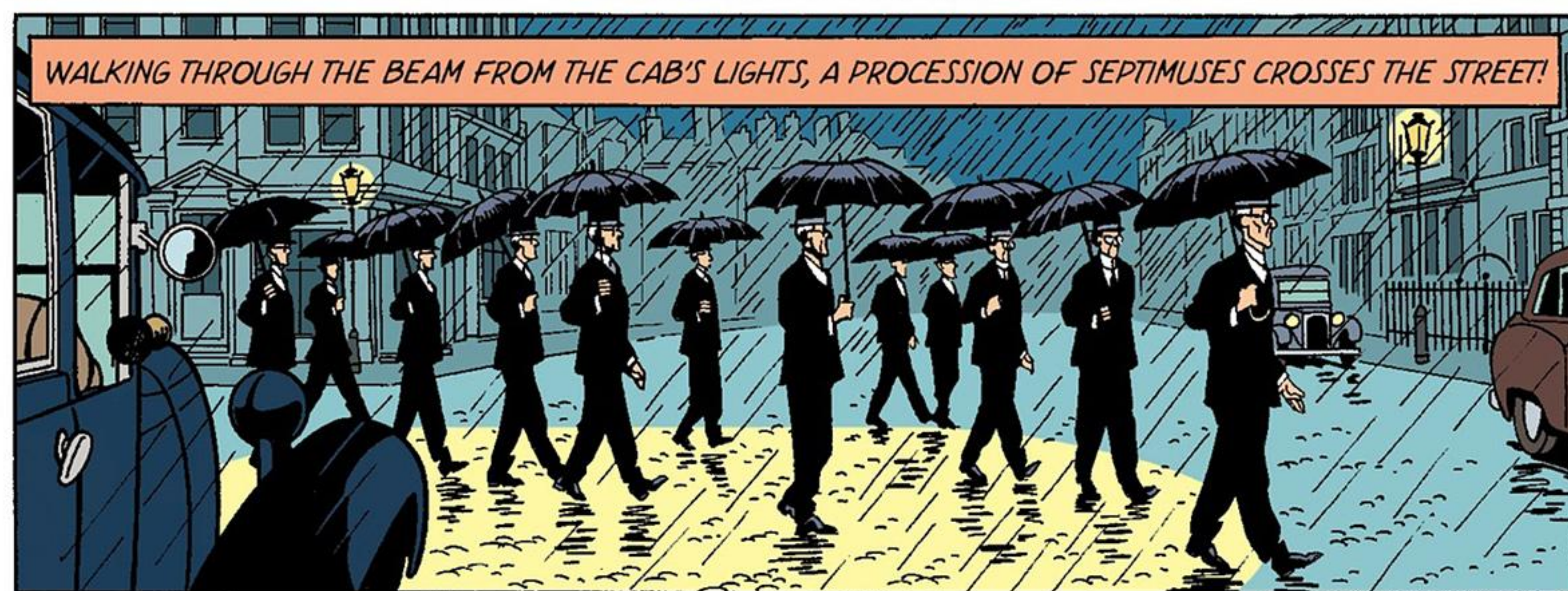
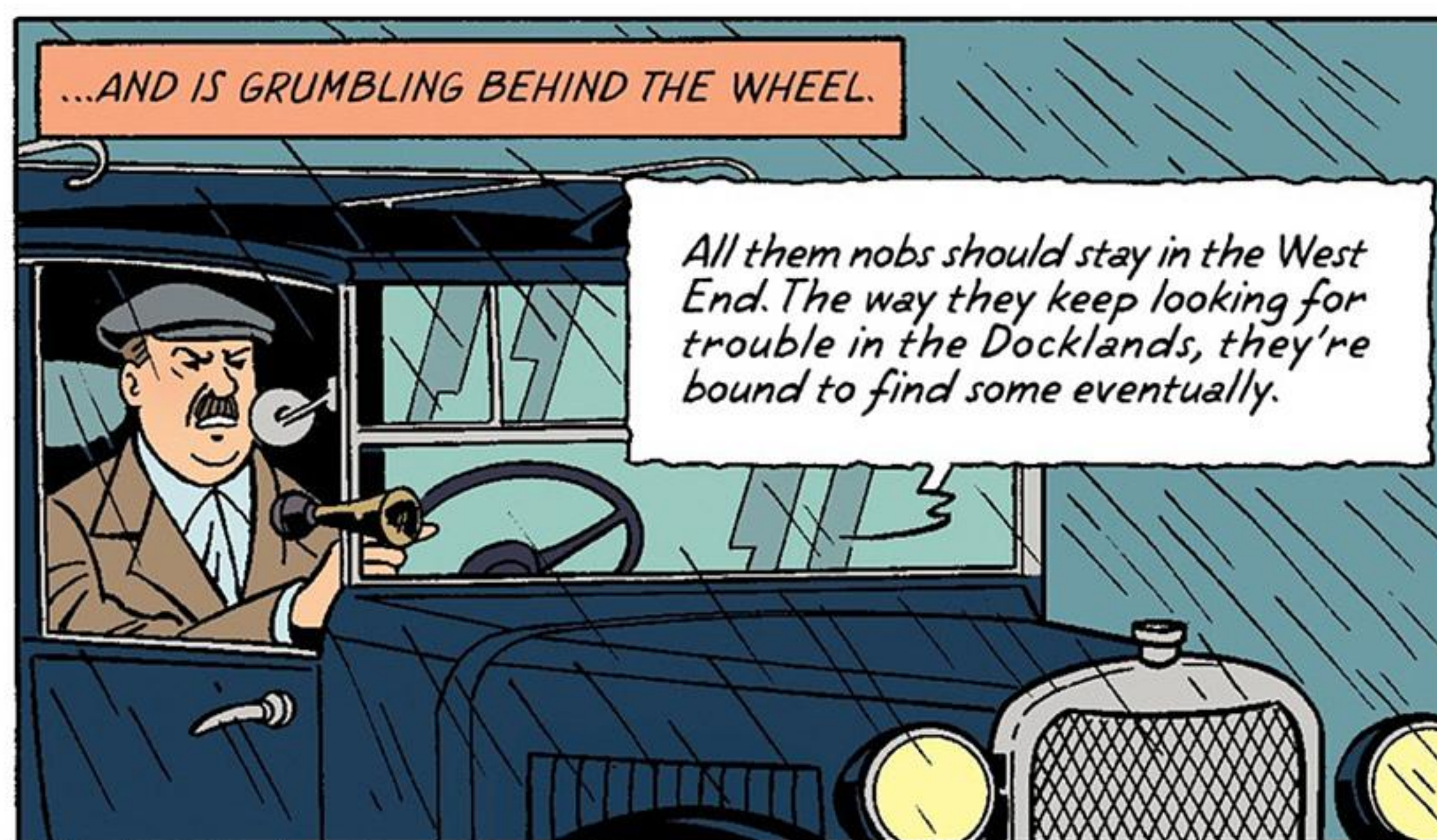
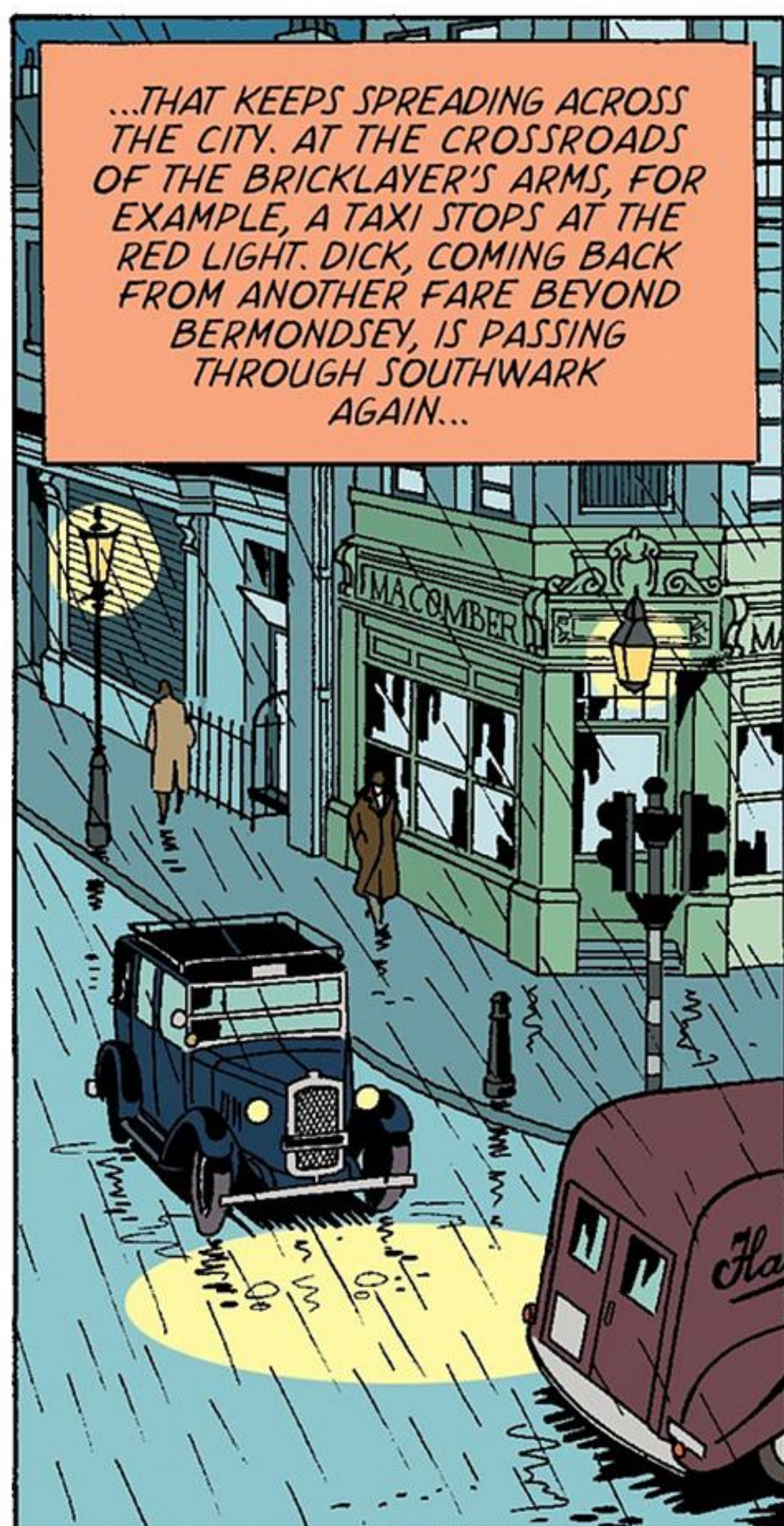
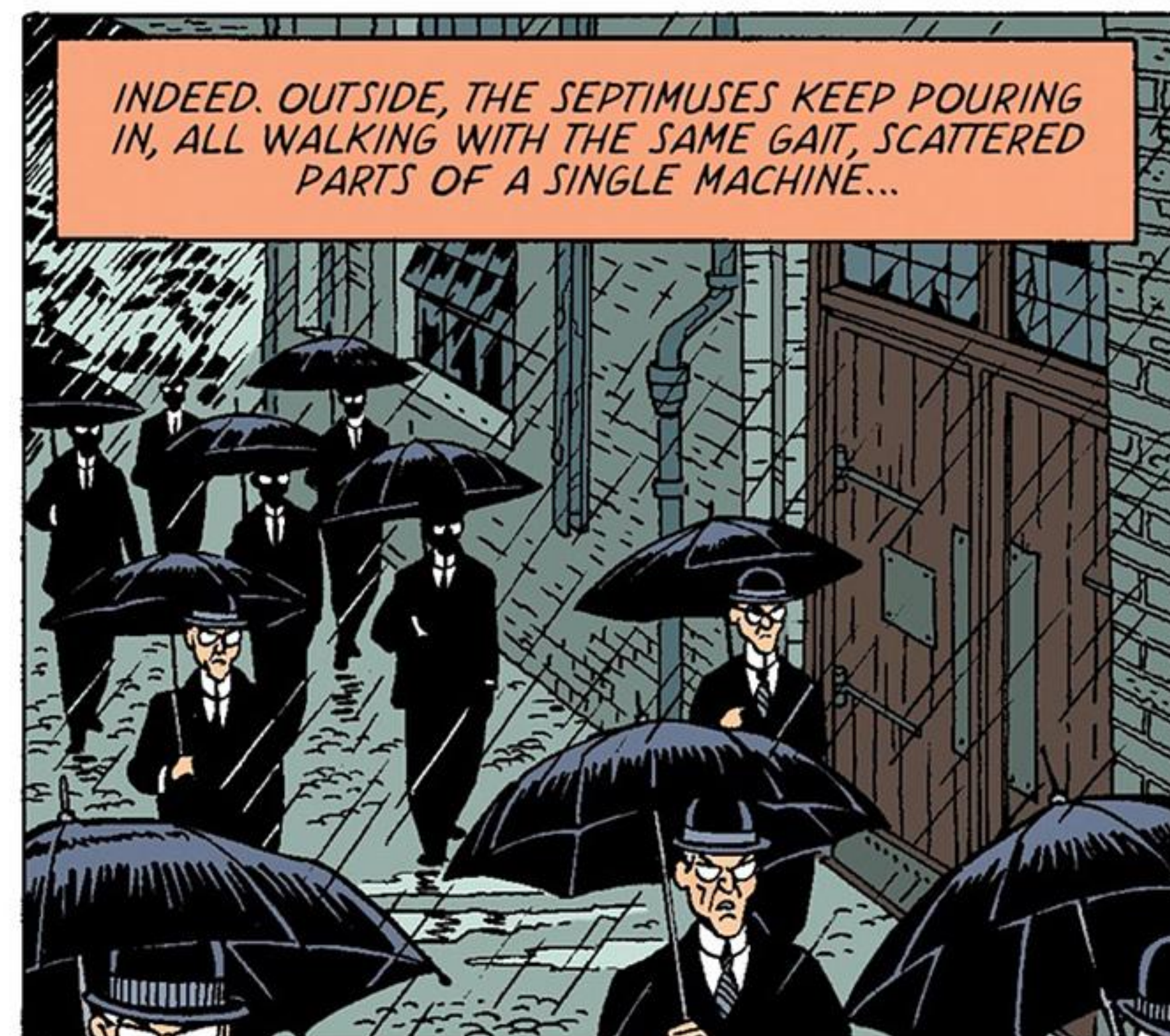
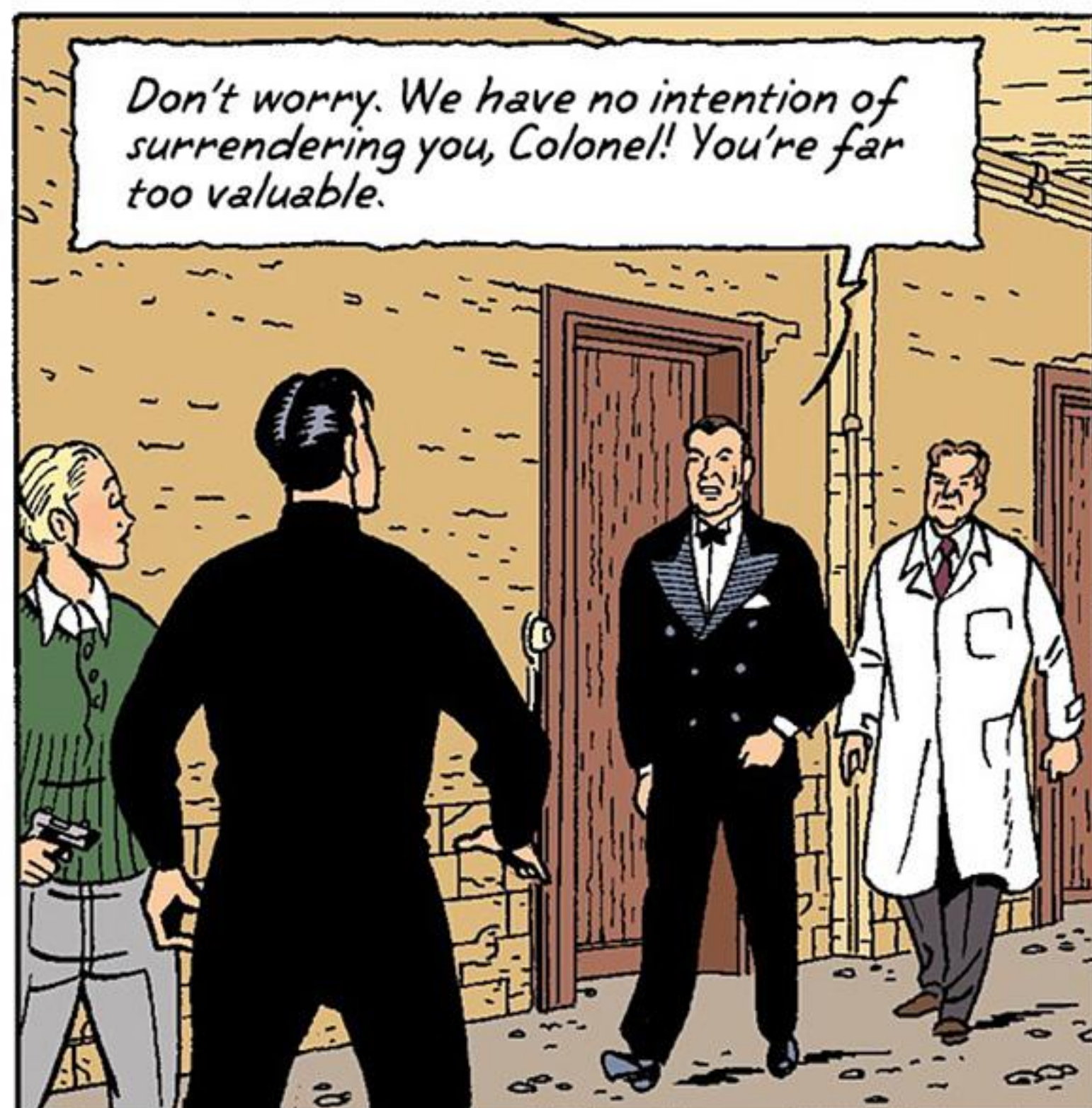












GLOBE THEATRE

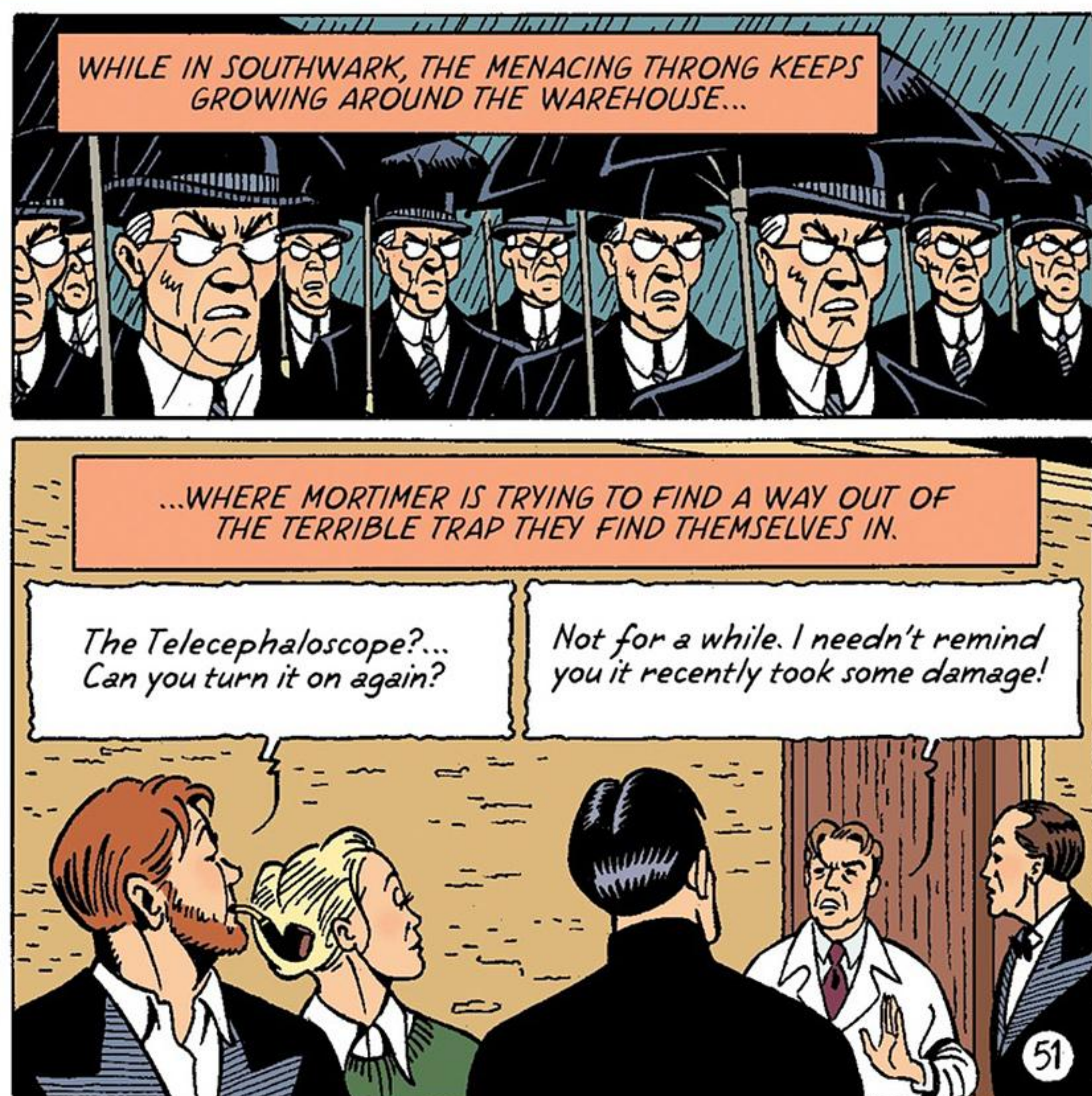
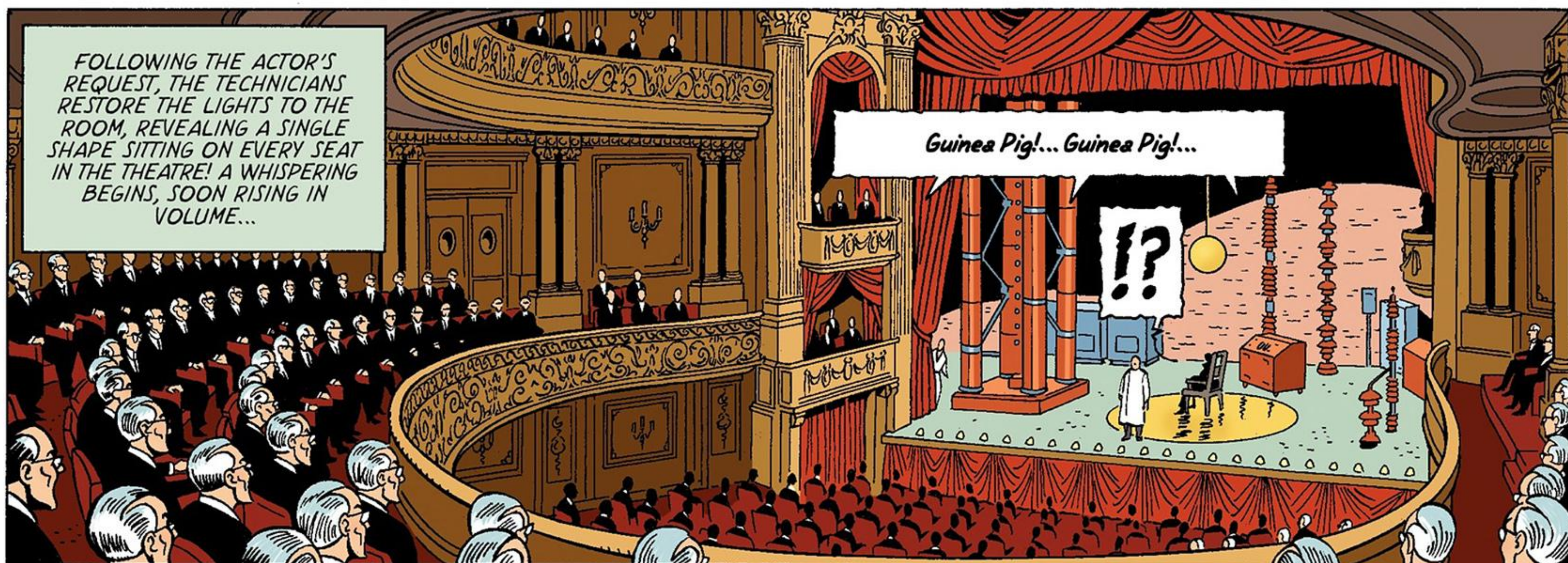
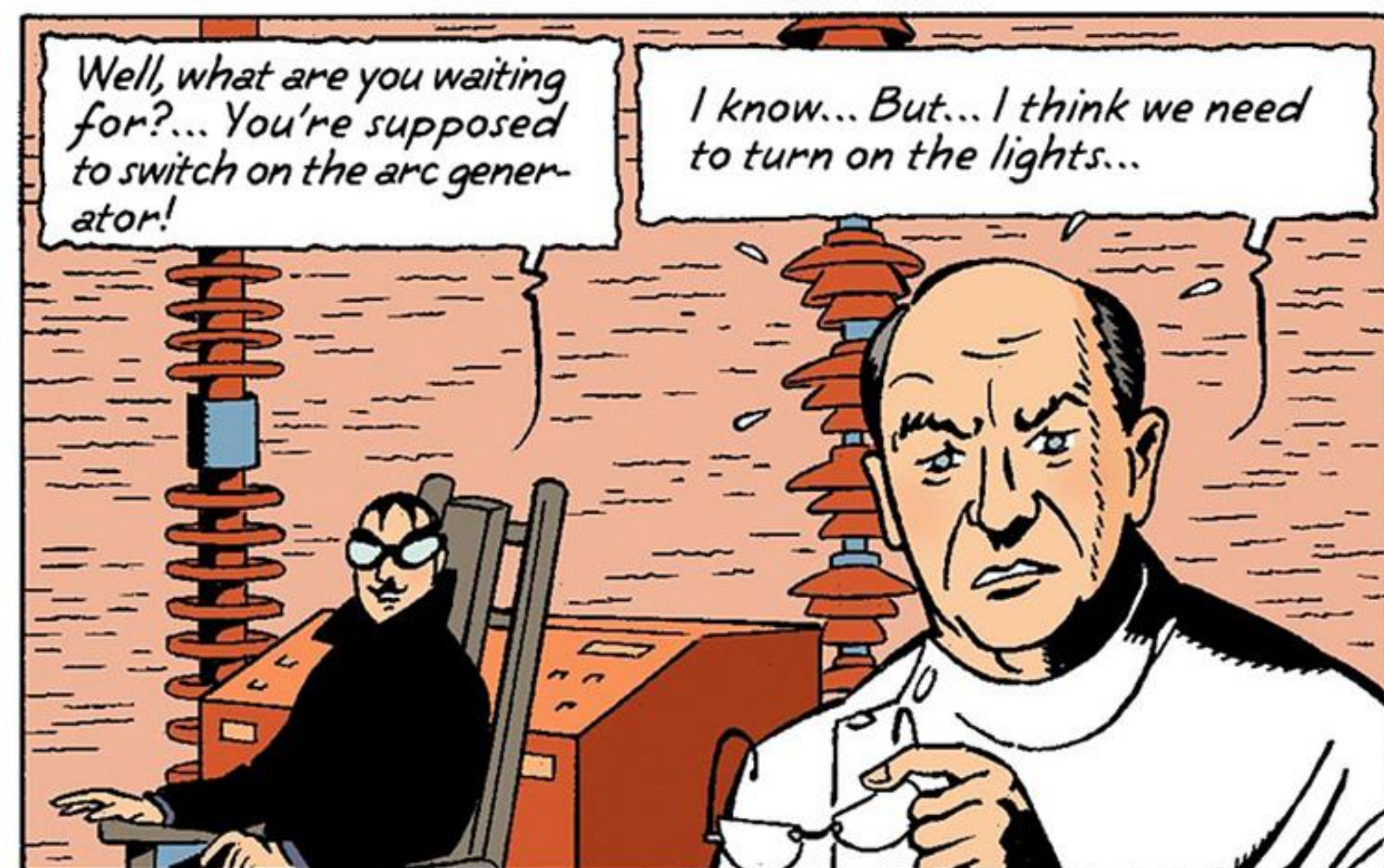
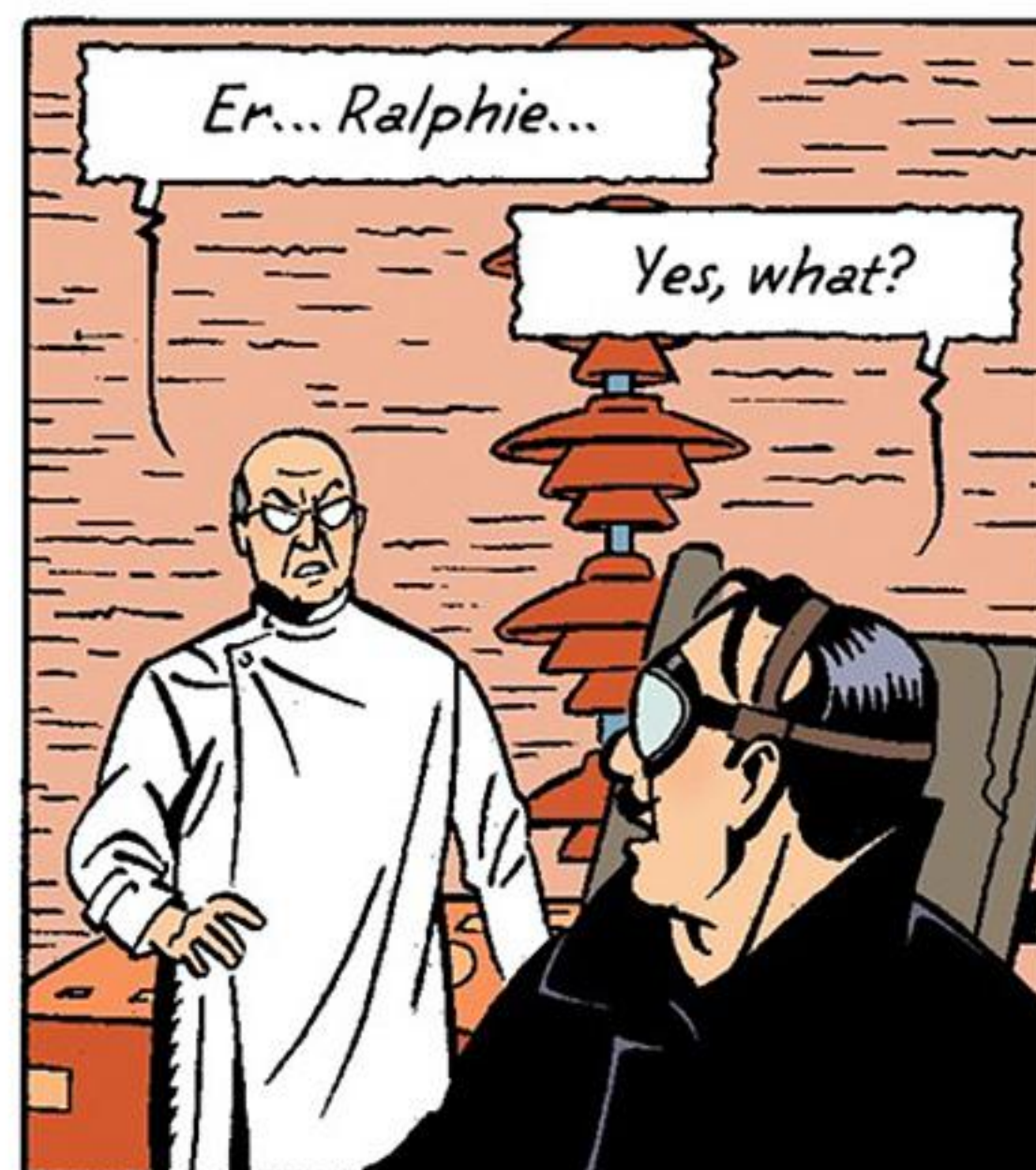
PETER SAUNDERS
presents

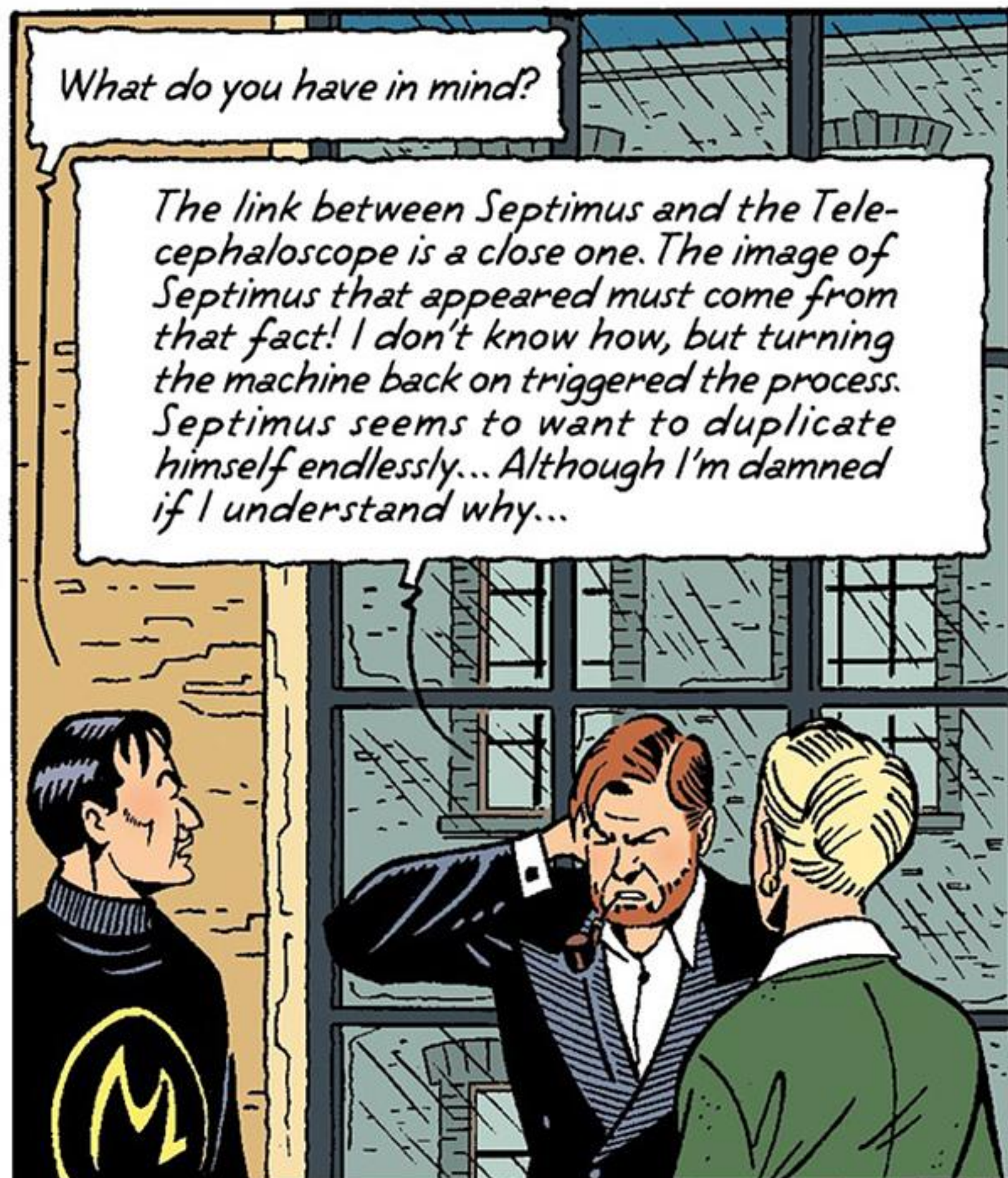
John GIELGUD Ralph RICHARDSON
John PAUL Noel WILLMAN
in

THE YELLOW M

a play by
EDGAR P. JACOBS

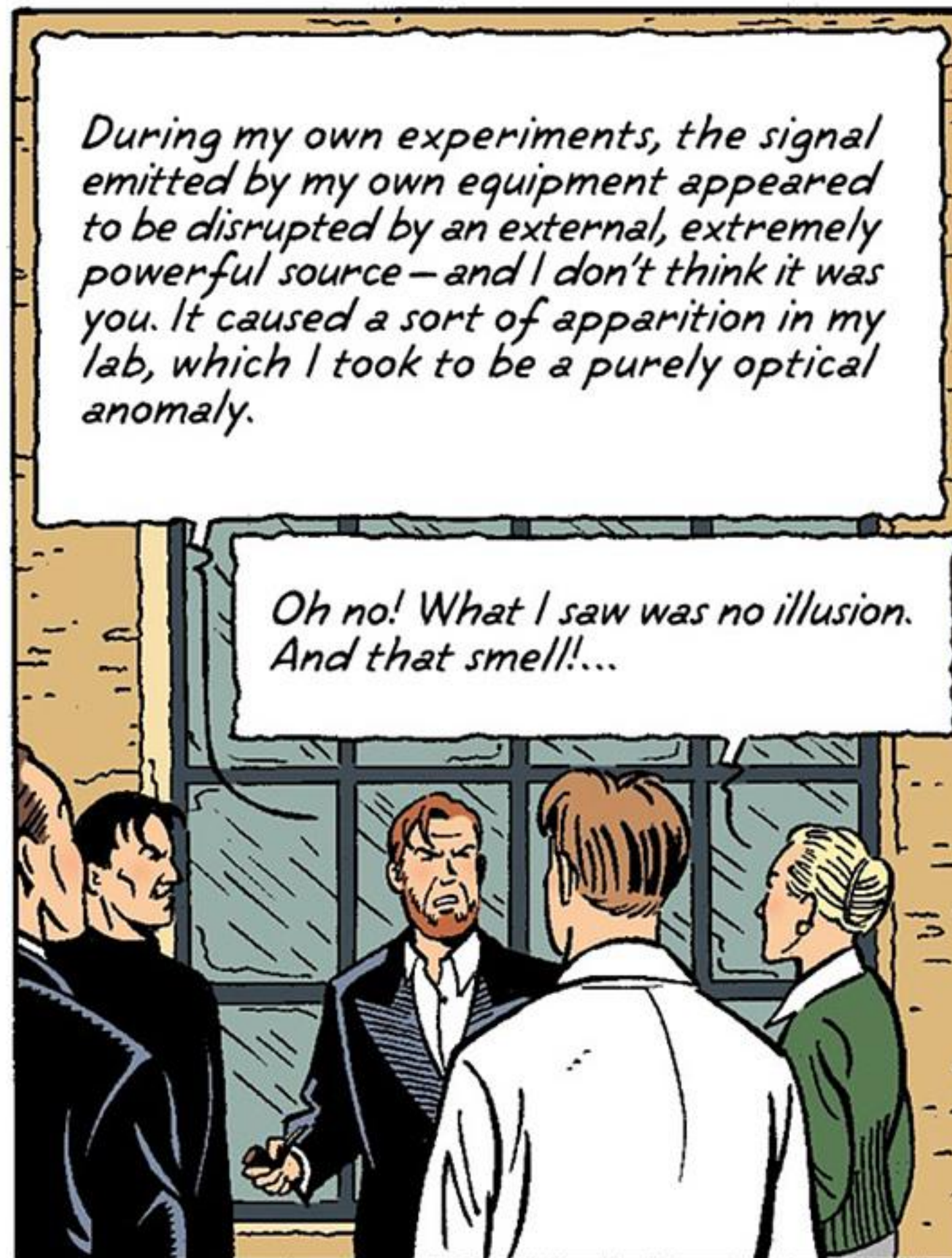
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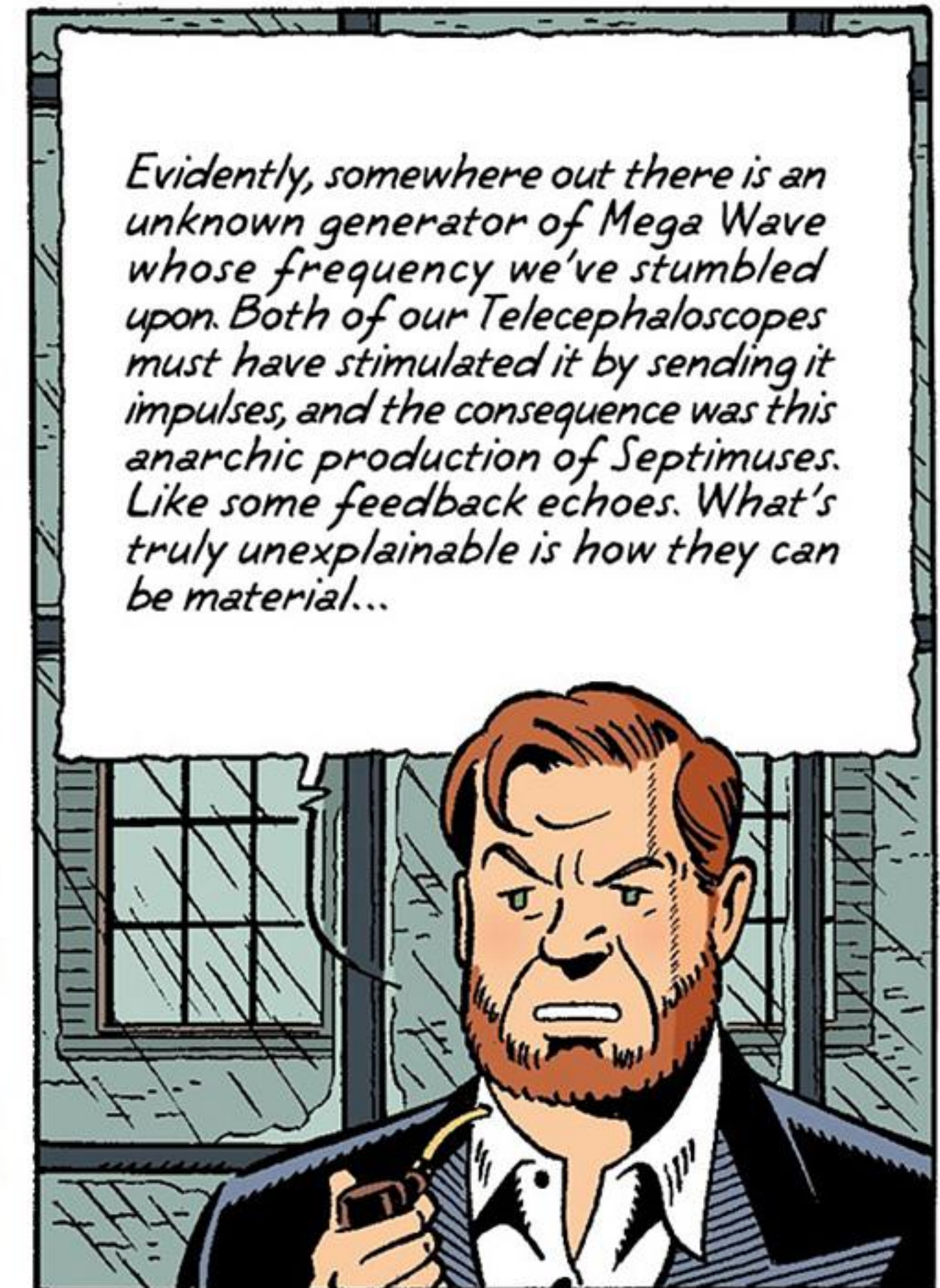
What do you have in mind?

The link between Septimus and the Telecephaloscope is a close one. The image of Septimus that appeared must come from that fact! I don't know how, but turning the machine back on triggered the process. Septimus seems to want to duplicate himself endlessly... Although I'm damned if I understand why...

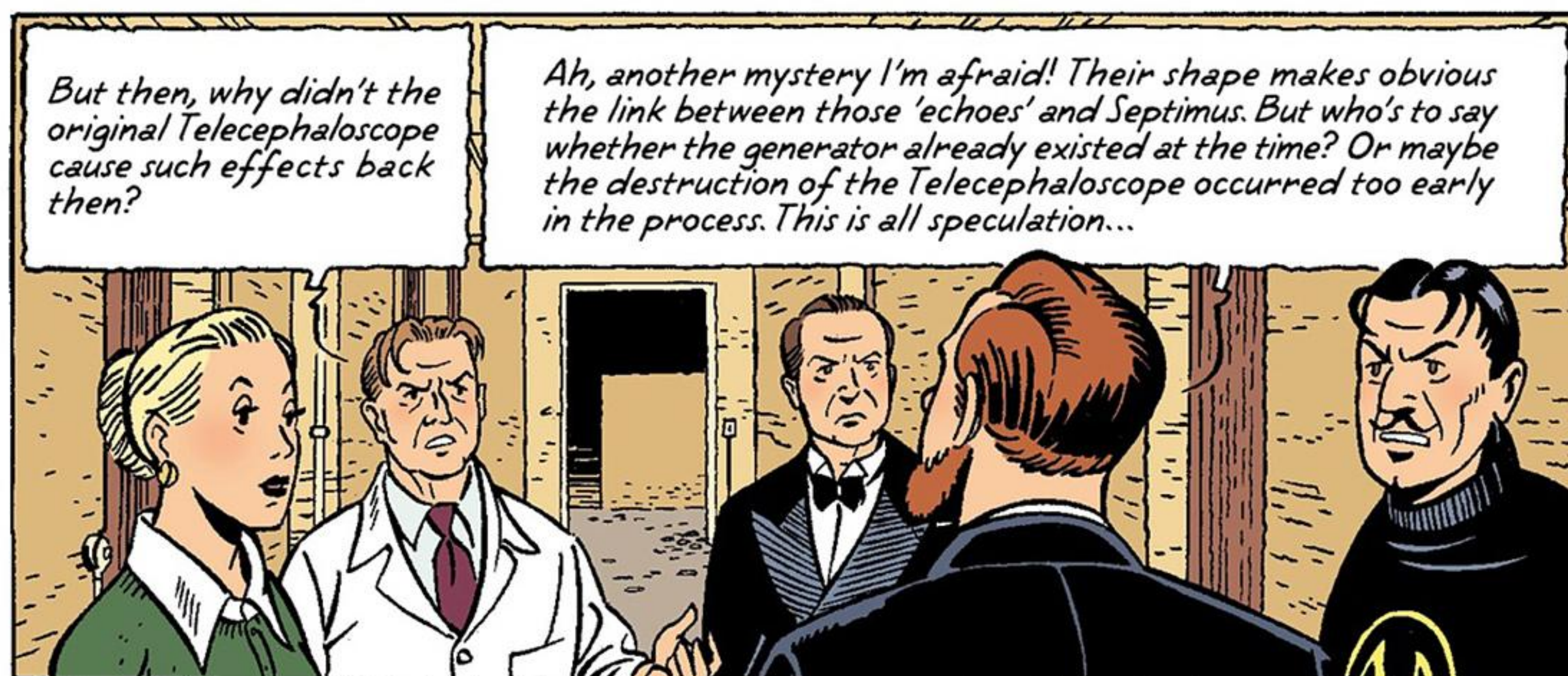


During my own experiments, the signal emitted by my own equipment appeared to be disrupted by an external, extremely powerful source – and I don't think it was you. It caused a sort of apparition in my lab, which I took to be a purely optical anomaly.

Oh no! What I saw was no illusion. And that smell!...

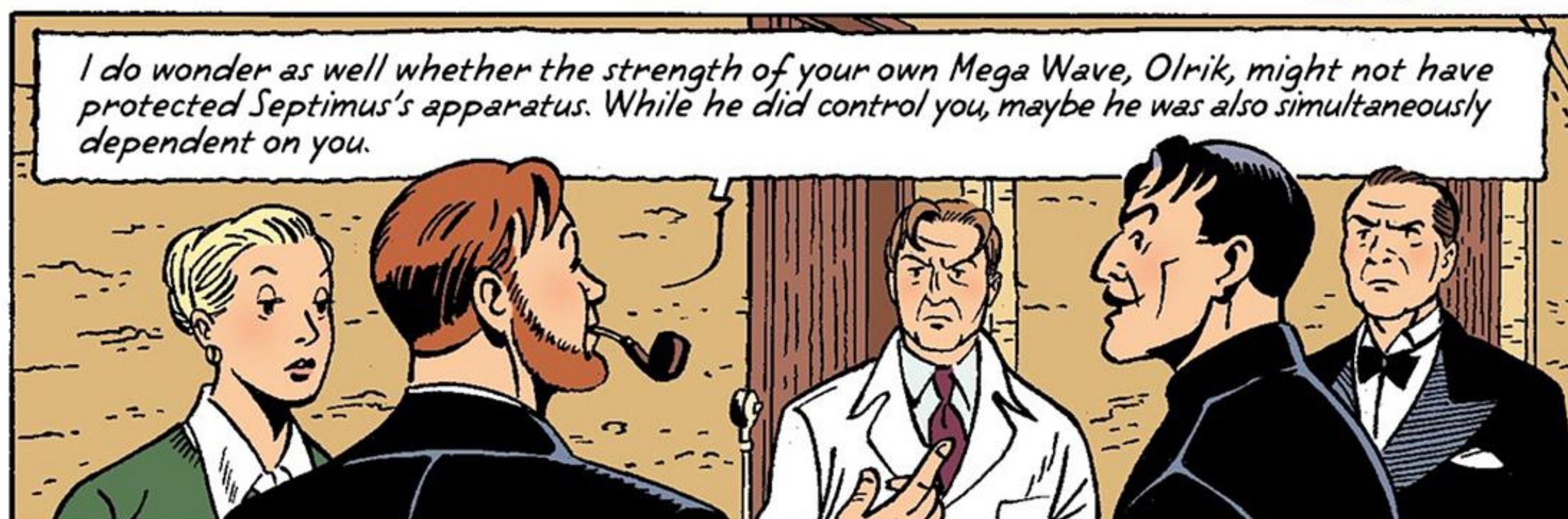


Evidently, somewhere out there is an unknown generator of Mega Wave whose frequency we've stumbled upon. Both of our Telecephaloscopes must have stimulated it by sending it impulses, and the consequence was this anarchic production of Septimuses. Like some feedback echoes. What's truly unexplainable is how they can be material...

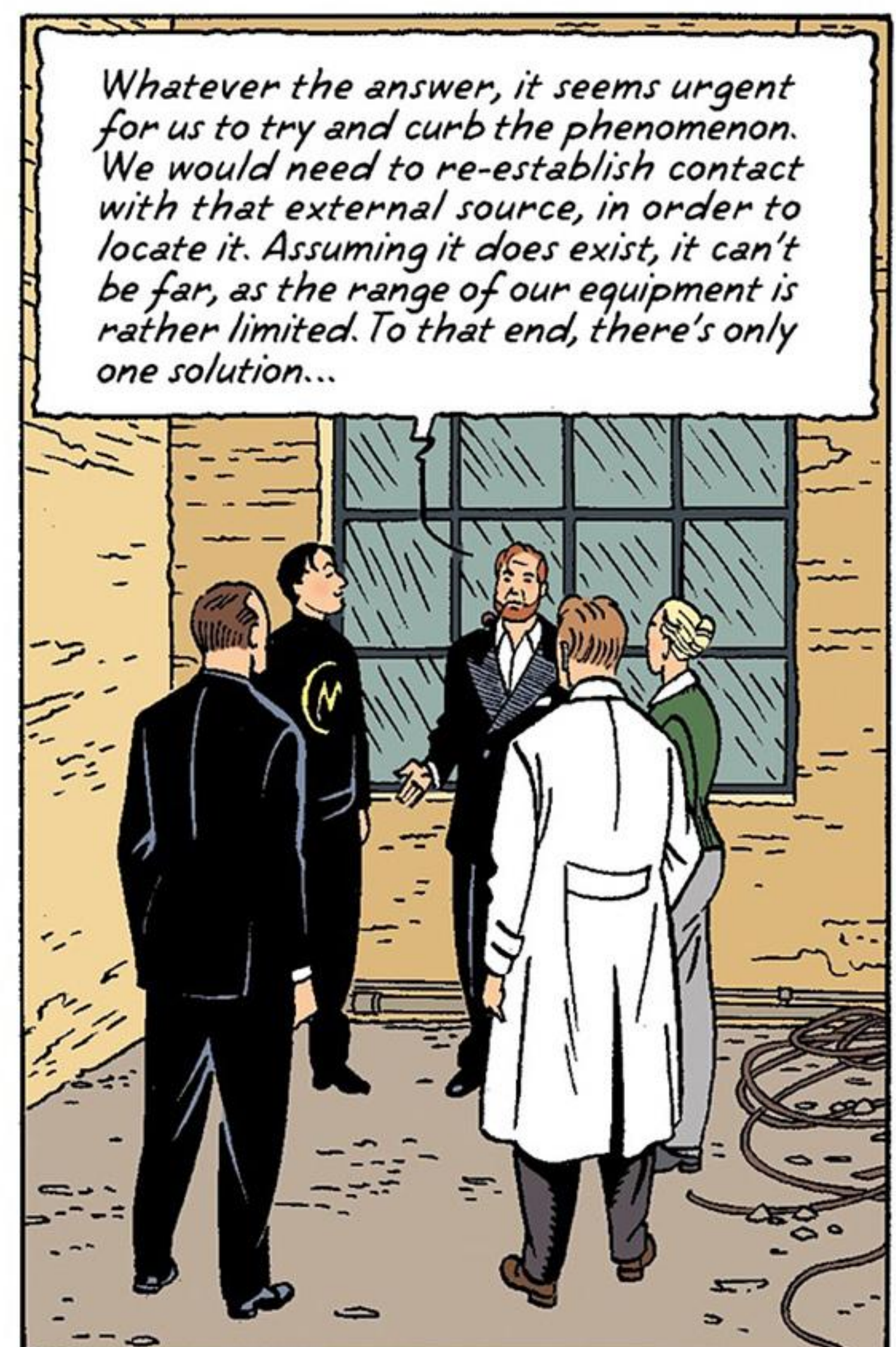


But then, why didn't the original Telecephaloscope cause such effects back then?

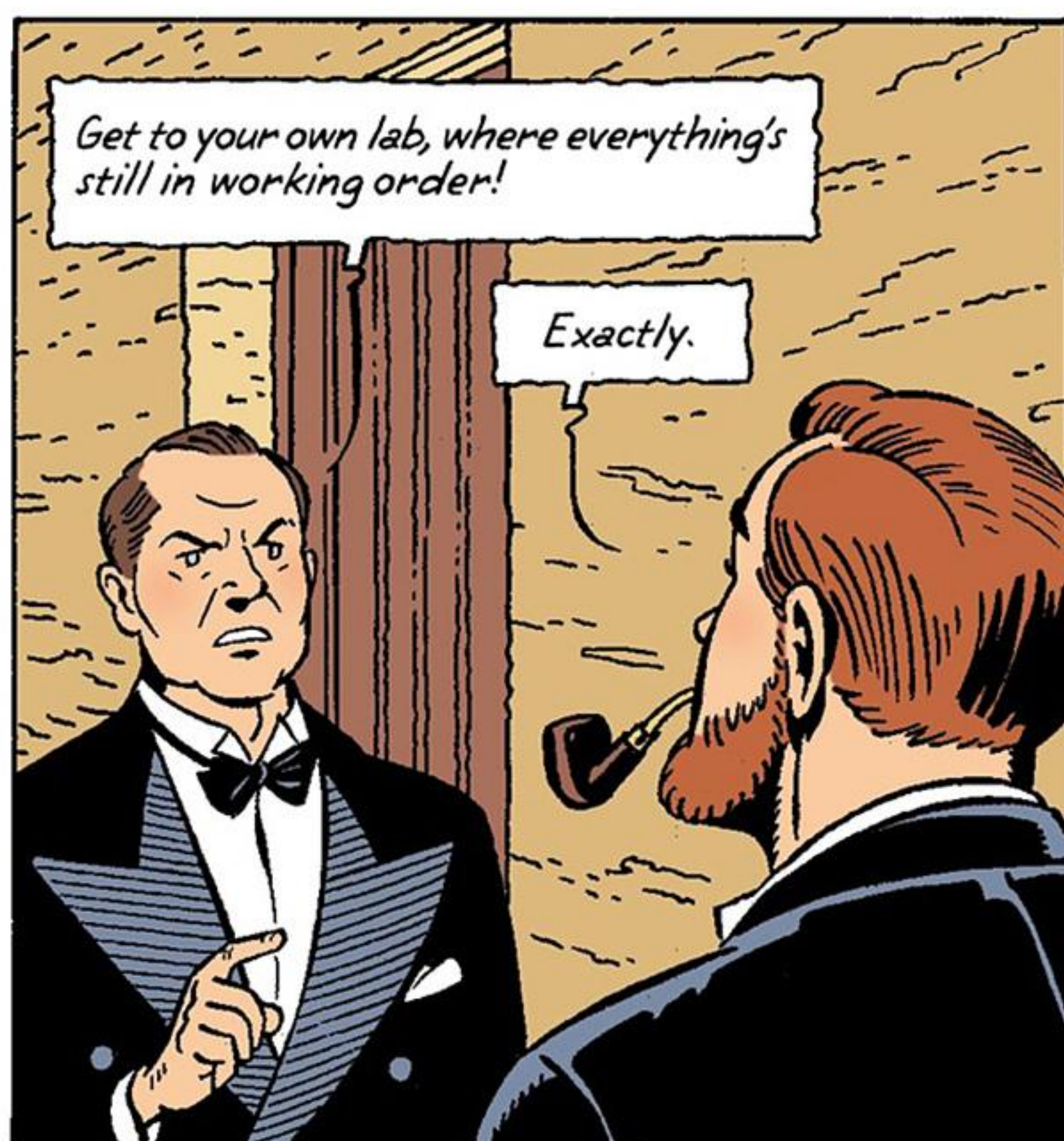
Ah, another mystery I'm afraid! Their shape makes obvious the link between those 'echoes' and Septimus. But who's to say whether the generator already existed at the time? Or maybe the destruction of the Telecephaloscope occurred too early in the process. This is all speculation...



I do wonder as well whether the strength of your own Mega Wave, Olrik, might not have protected Septimus's apparatus. While he did control you, maybe he was also simultaneously dependent on you.



Whatever the answer, it seems urgent for us to try and curb the phenomenon. We would need to re-establish contact with that external source, in order to locate it. Assuming it does exist, it can't be far, as the range of our equipment is rather limited. To that end, there's only one solution...

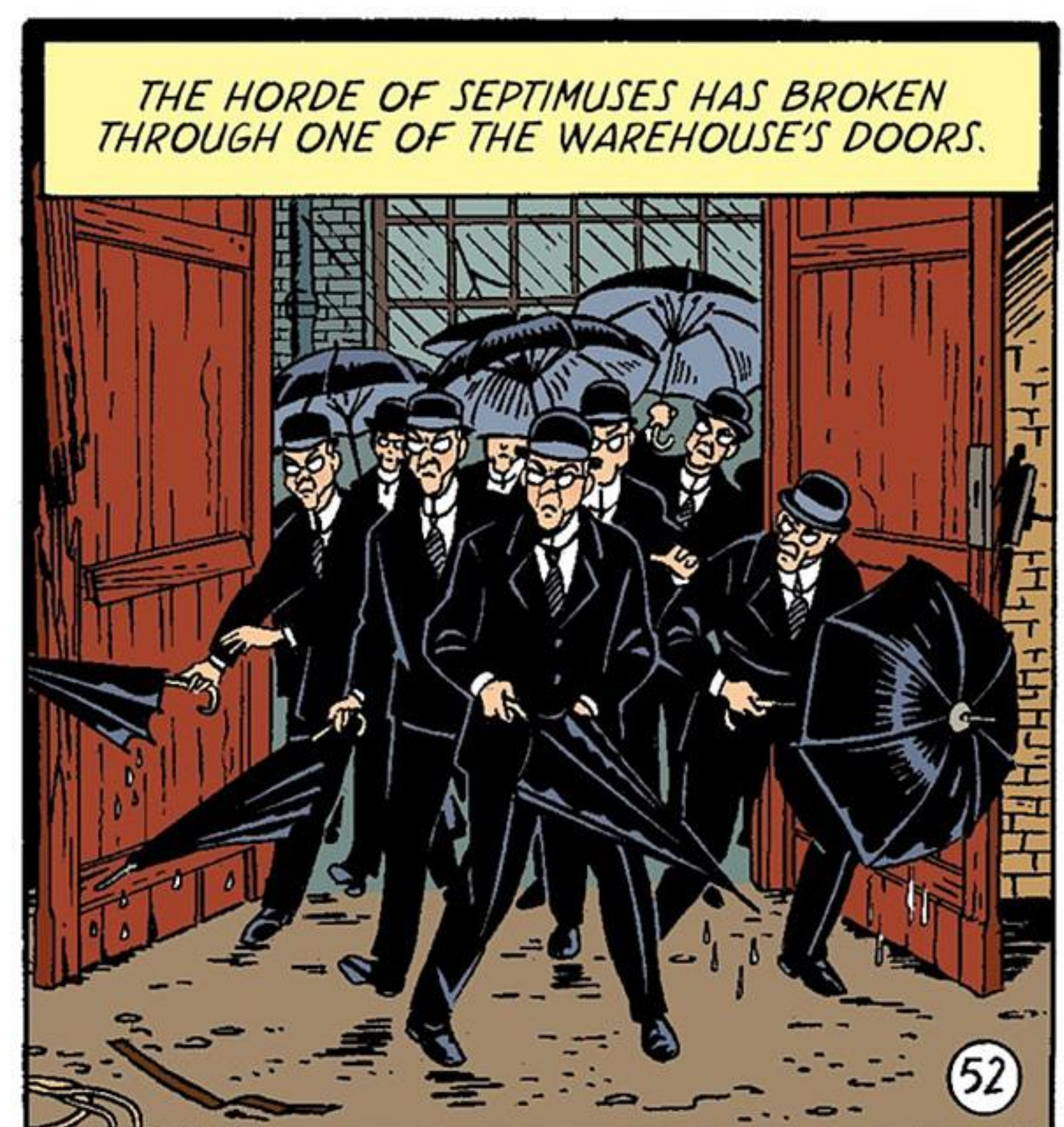


Get to your own lab, where everything's still in working order!

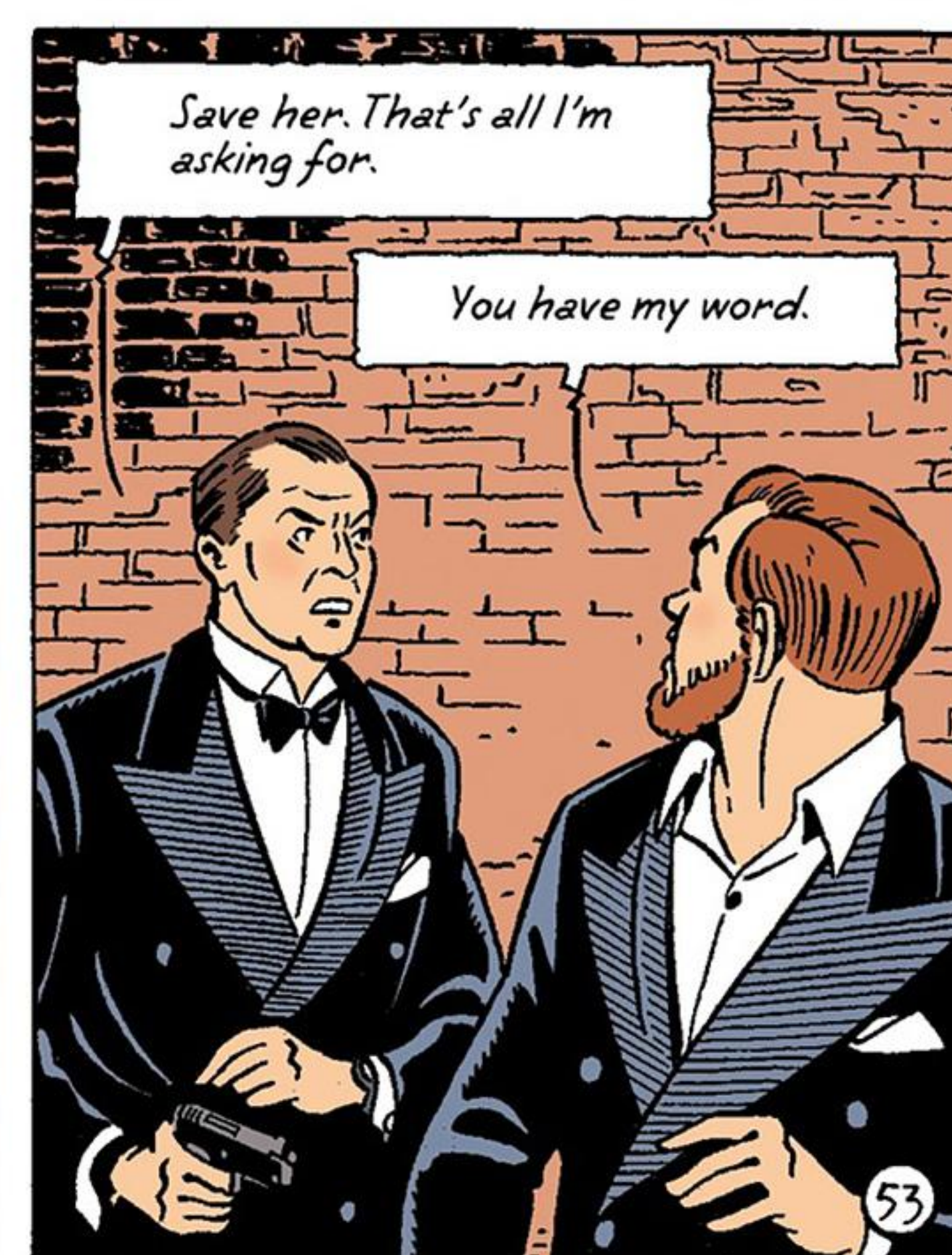
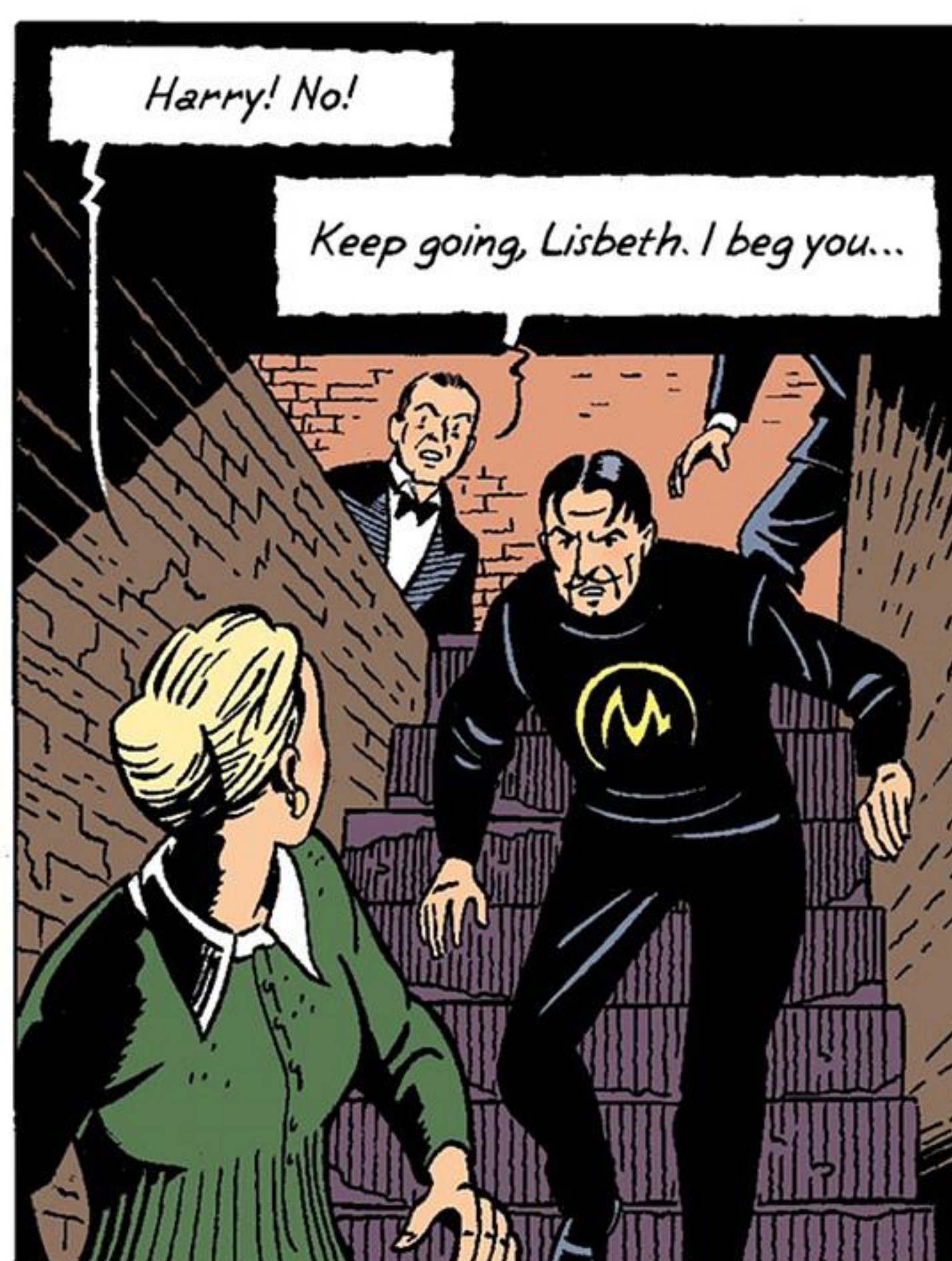
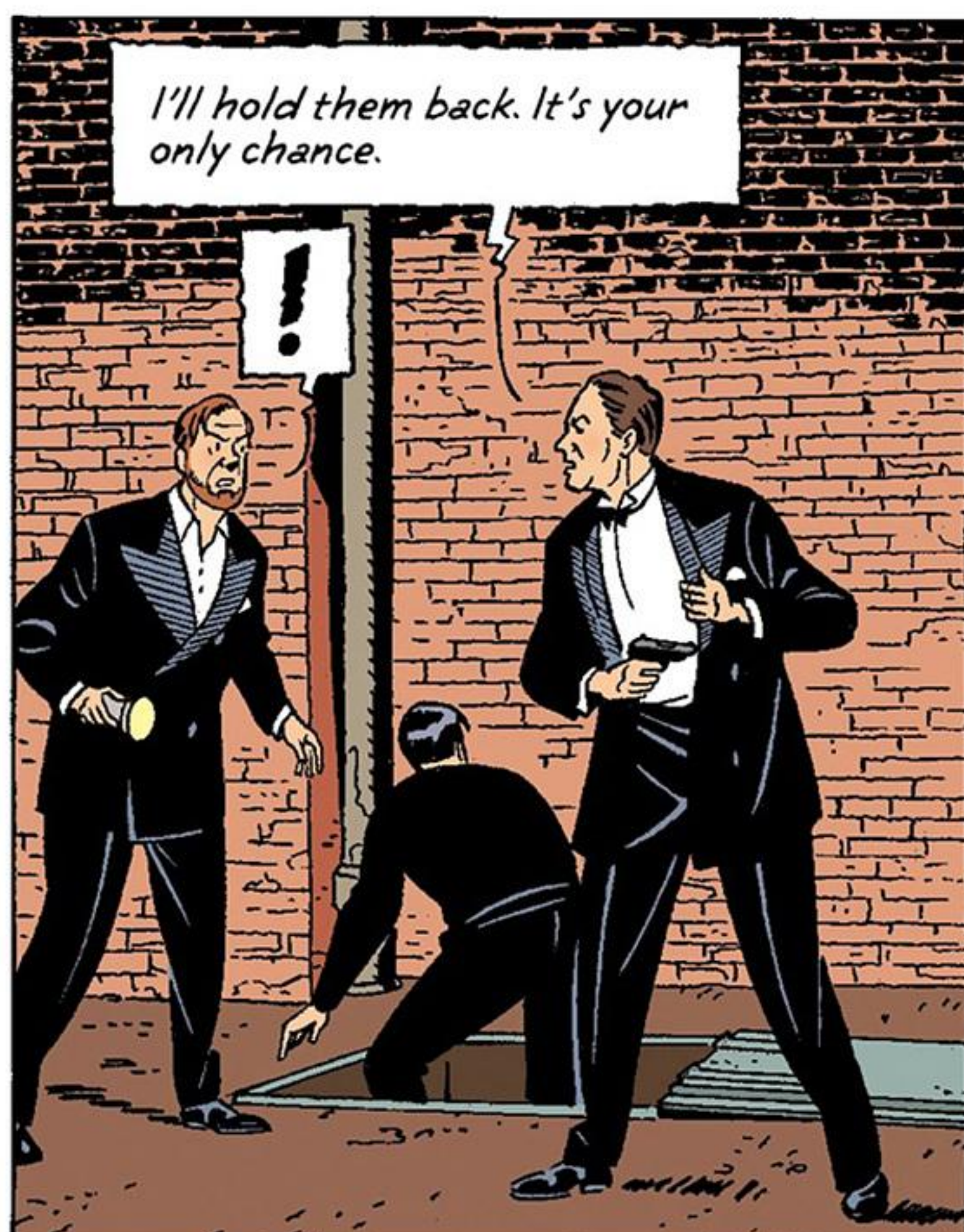
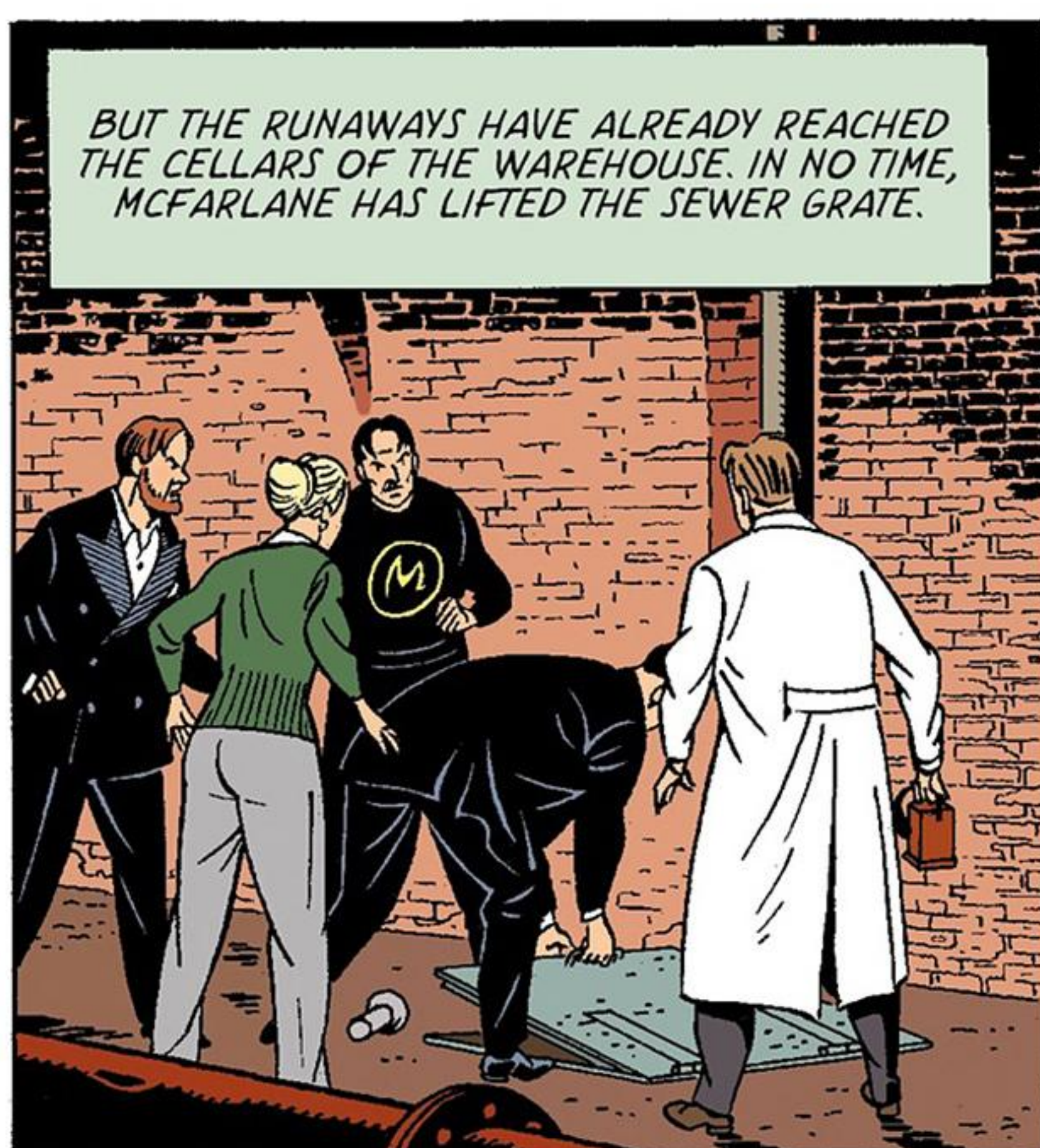
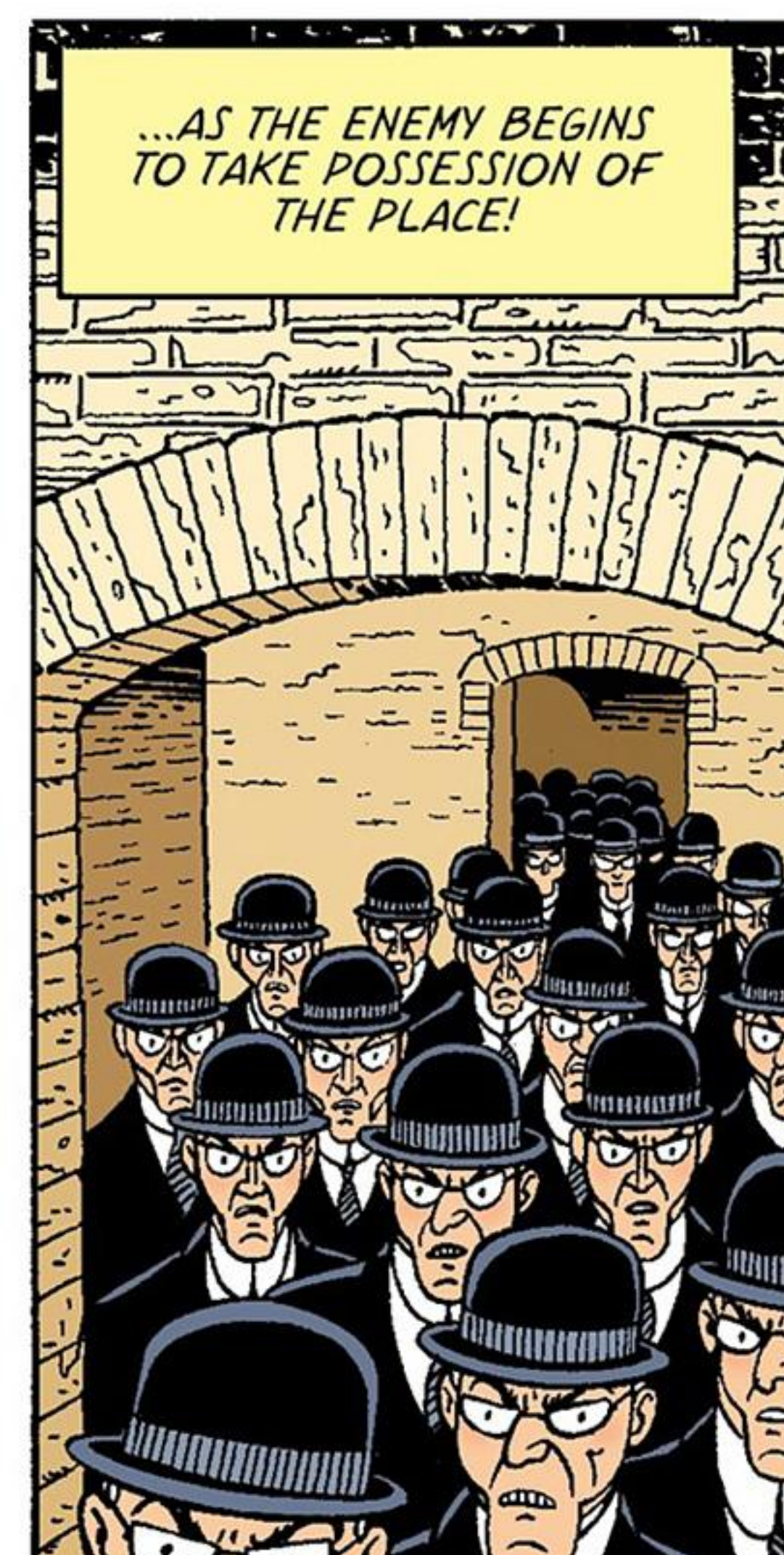
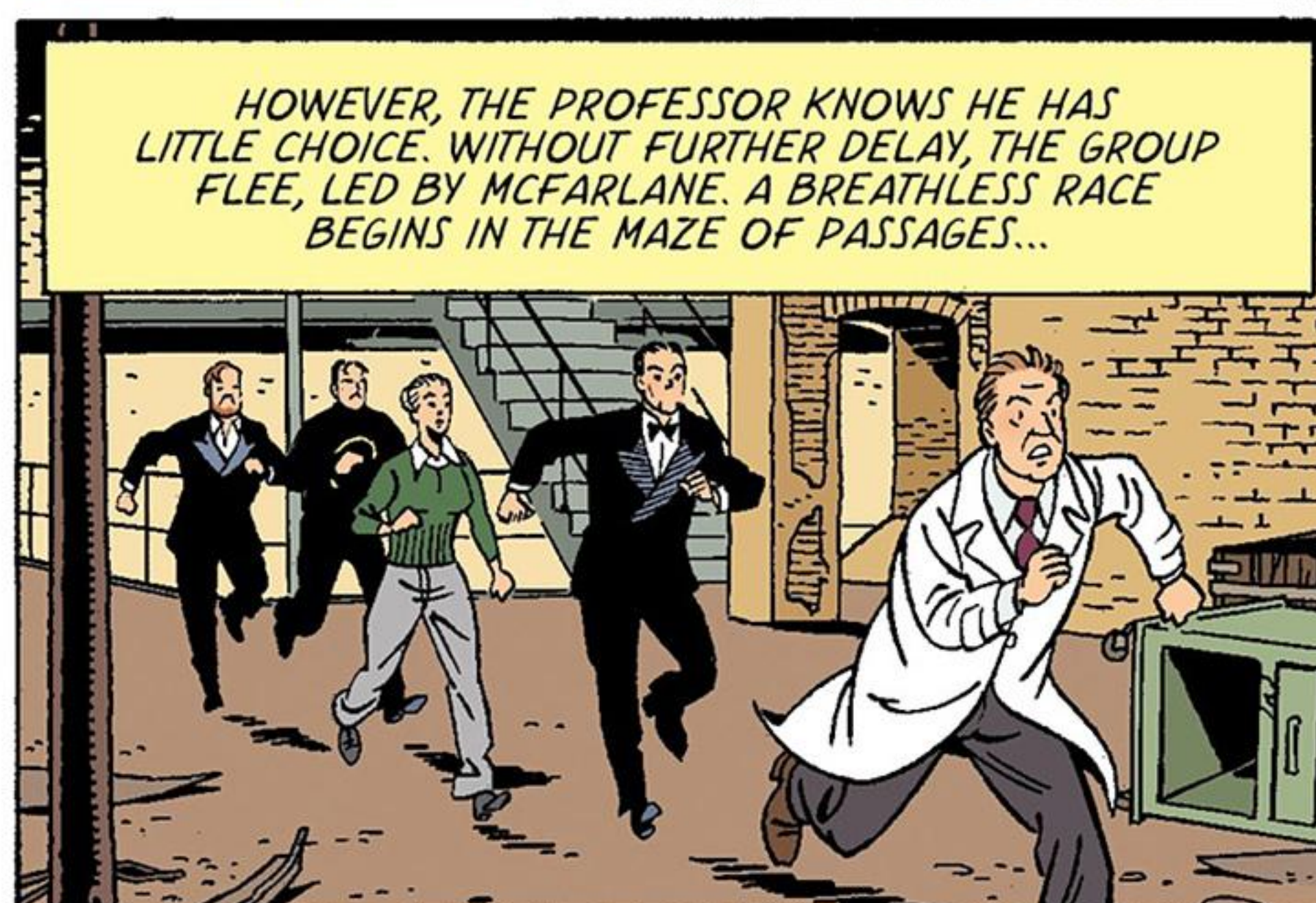
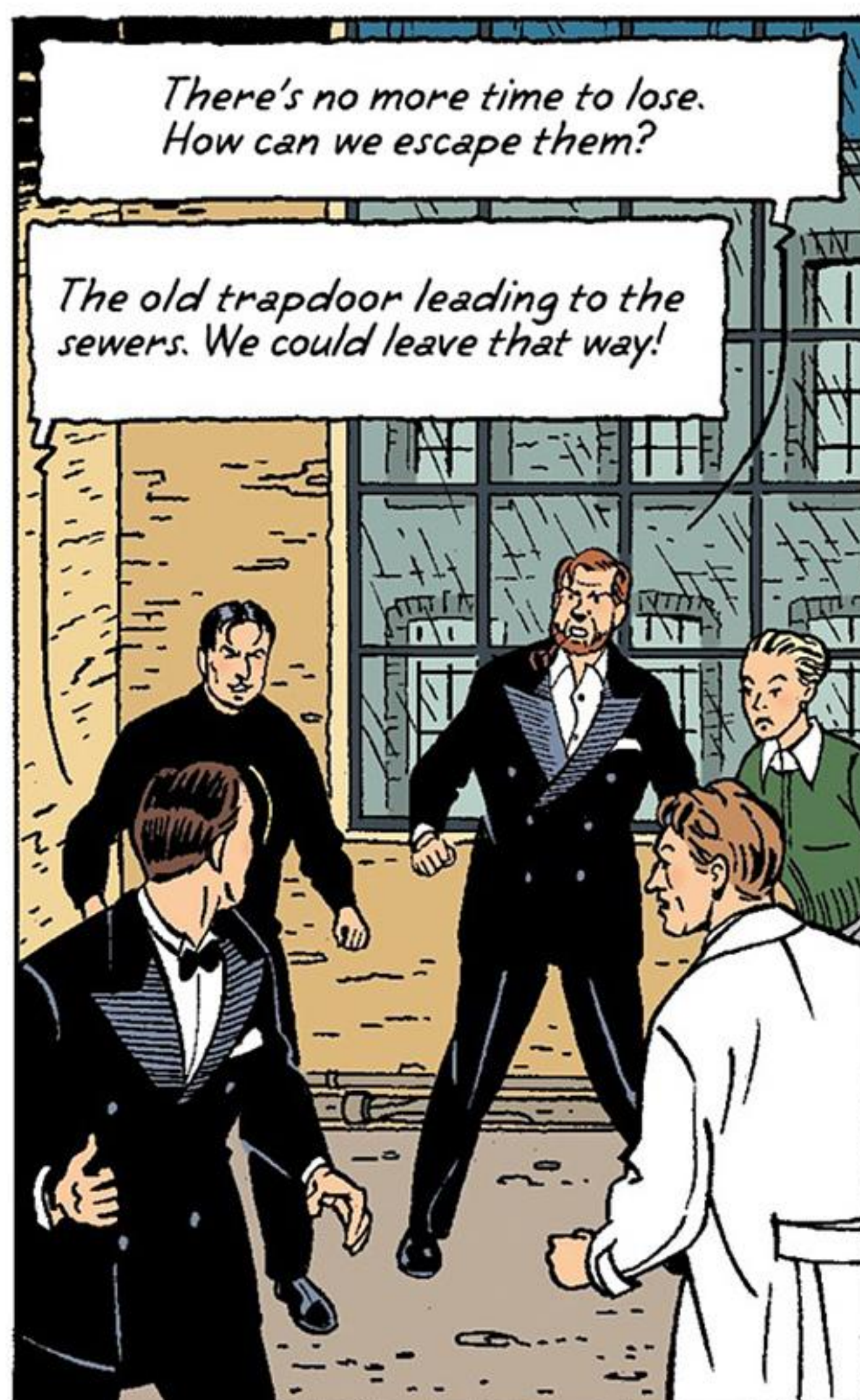
Exactly.

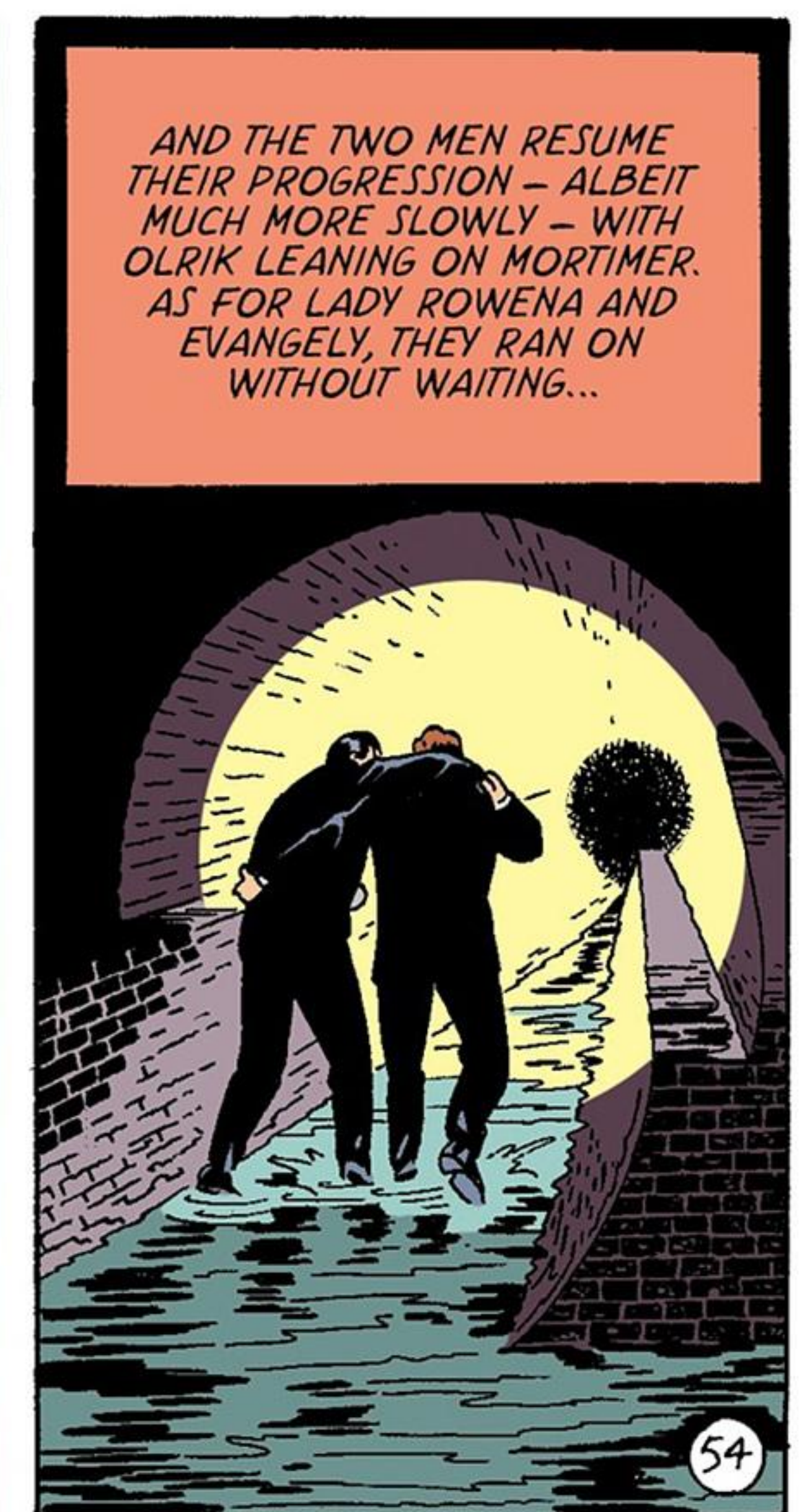
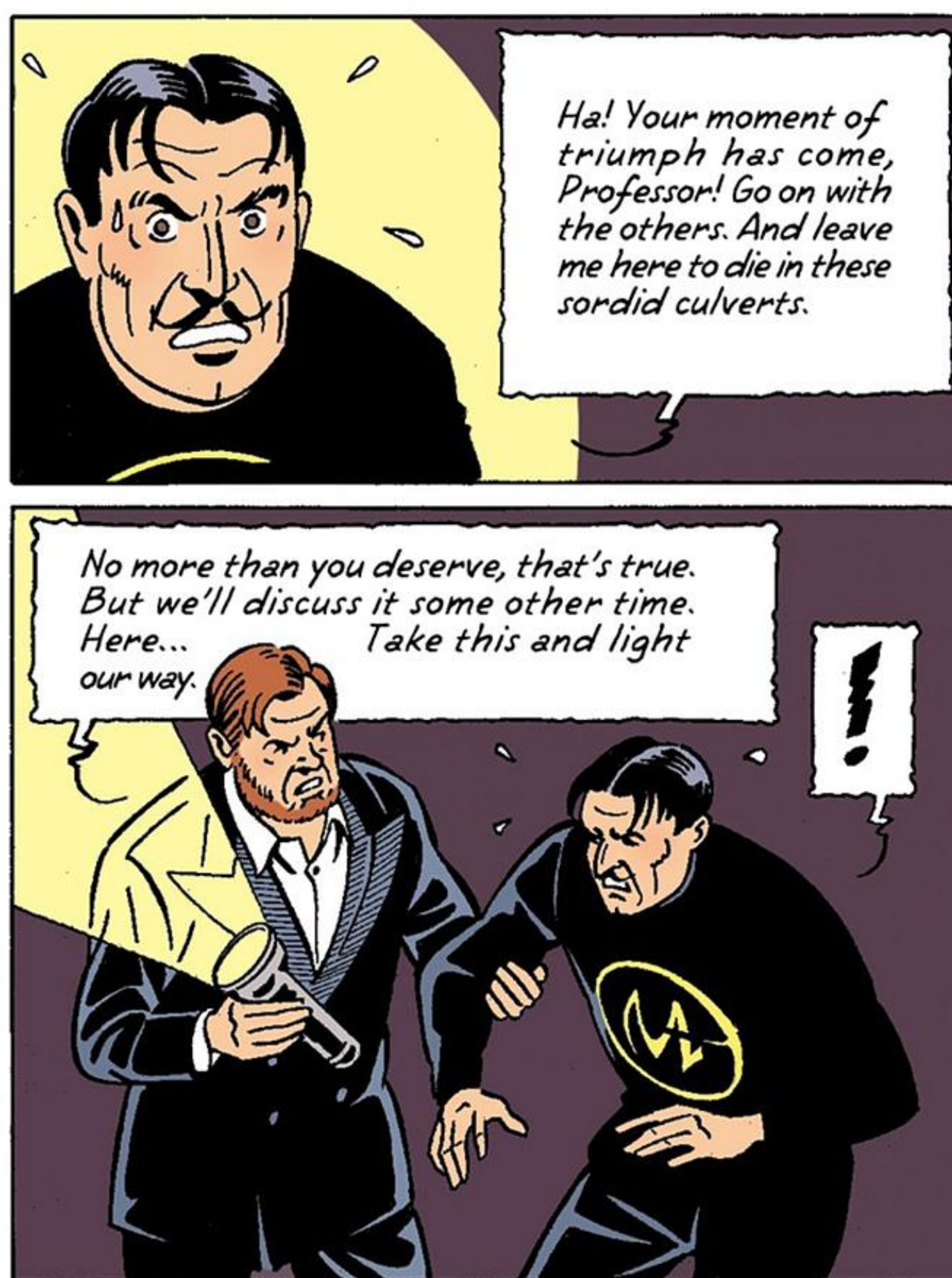
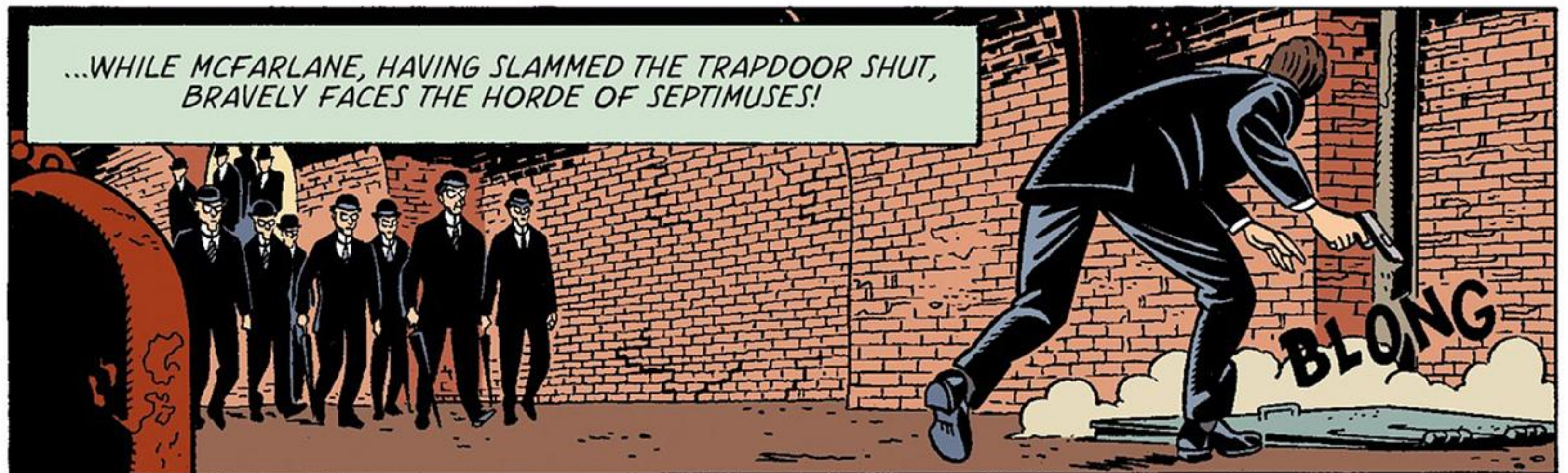


THE DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, IS INTERRUPTED BY A LOUD NOISE COMING FROM OUTSIDE...



THE HORDE OF SEPTIMUSES HAS BROKEN THROUGH ONE OF THE WAREHOUSE'S DOORS.





WHILE THE TWO MEN TRY TO FIND THEIR WAY THROUGH THE MAZE OF TUNNELS THAT IS LONDON'S SEWERS, AN IMPORTANT MEETING IS TAKING PLACE AT 10 DOWNING STREET. AS DAWN APPROACHES, THE CAPITAL IS ABOUT TO DISCOVER THE SERIOUSNESS OF A SITUATION THAT HAS SO FAR ESCAPED ITS ATTENTION...

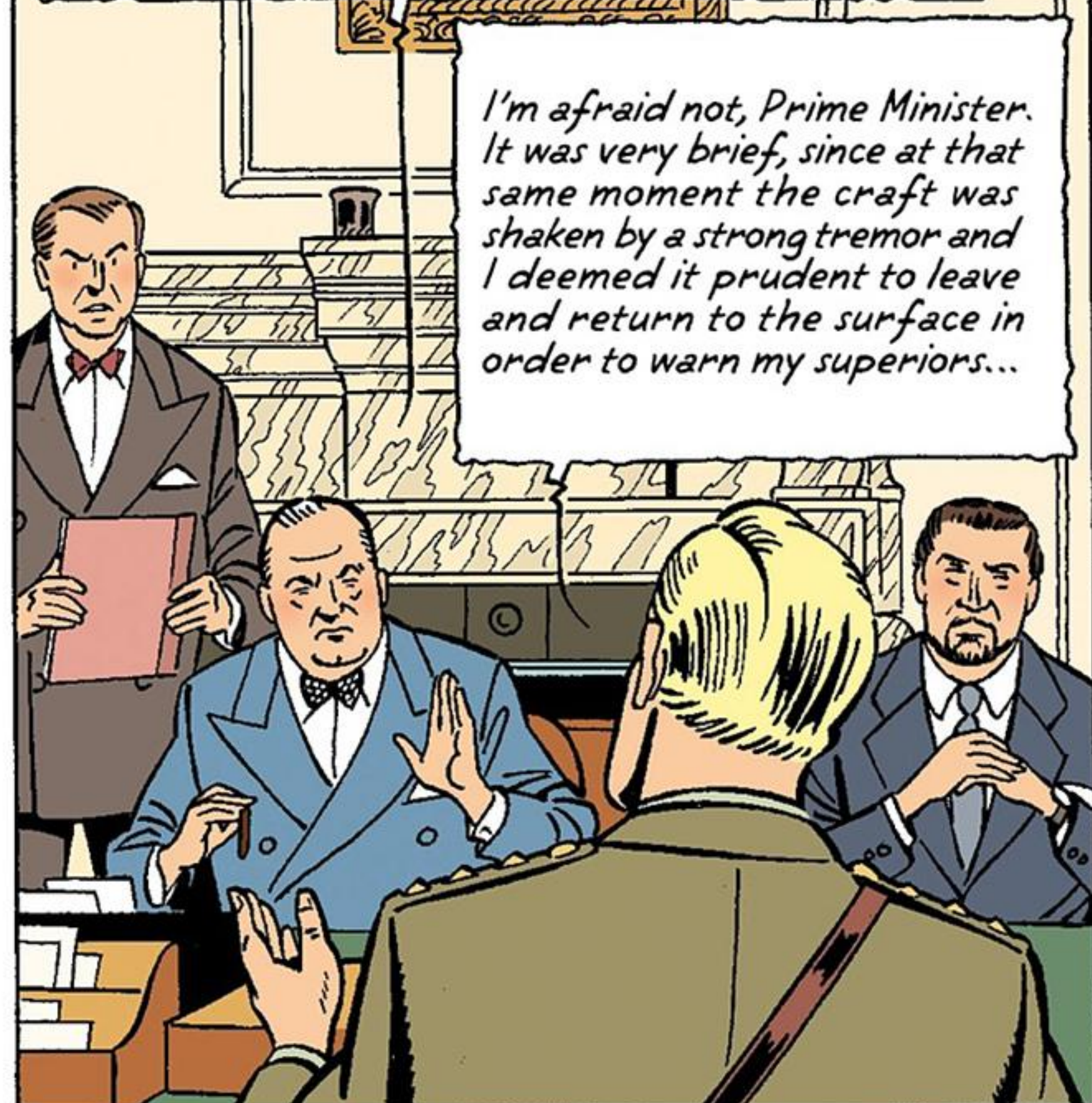


WE FIND CAPTAIN BLAKE MAKING HIS REPORT ON THE LATEST EVENTS – CENTRED AROUND THE DISCOVERY OF WHAT CAN ONLY BE CALLED A SPACESHIP OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN, CAUGHT IN, TETHERED TO THE CITY'S BOWELS.



And that silhouette trying to exit from what you called a cockpit looked like Septimus!? Is this a joke?

I'm afraid not, Prime Minister. It was very brief, since at that same moment the craft was shaken by a strong tremor and I deemed it prudent to leave and return to the surface in order to warn my superiors...



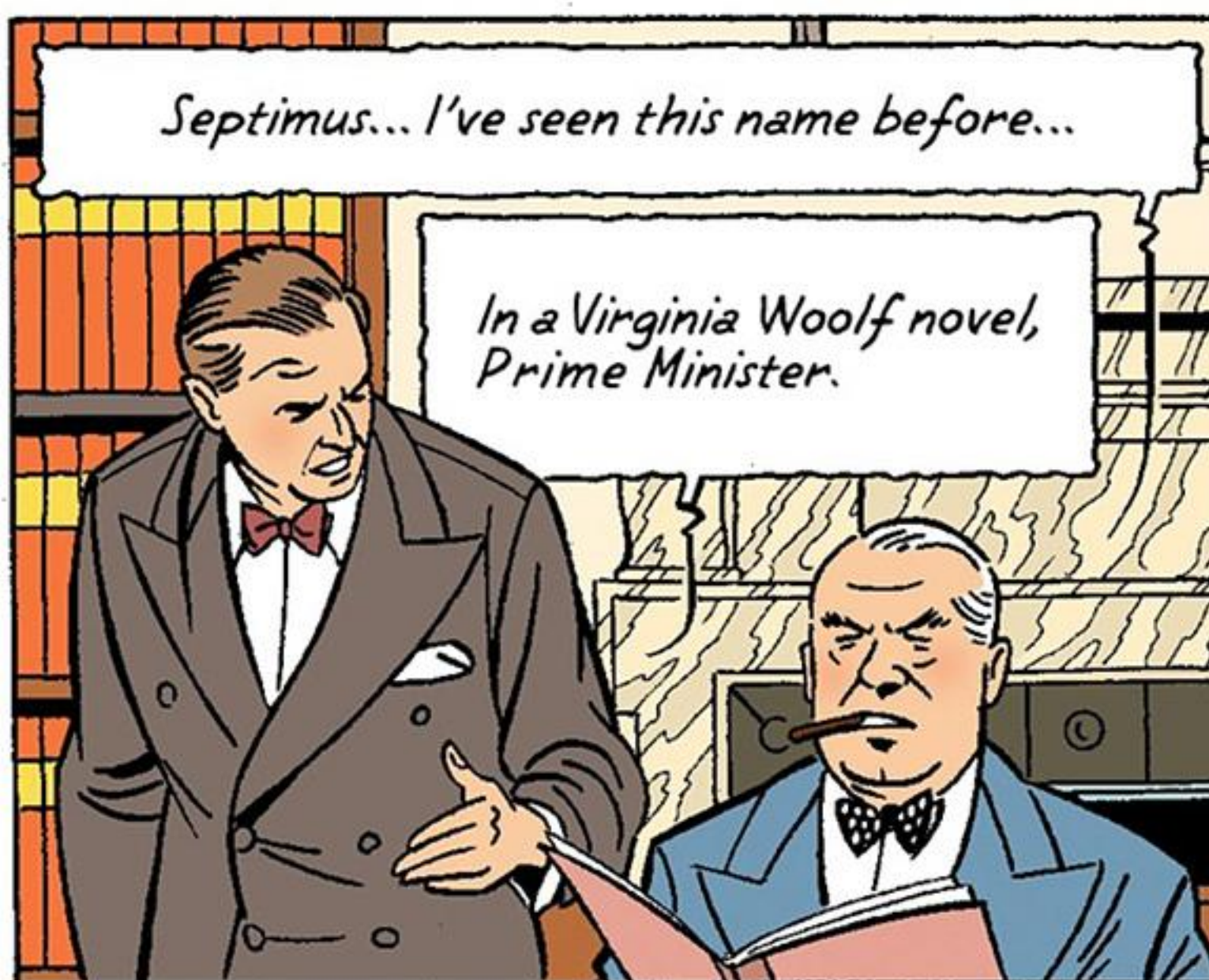
Er... Prime Minister... About Professor Septimus...

Yes, what?!

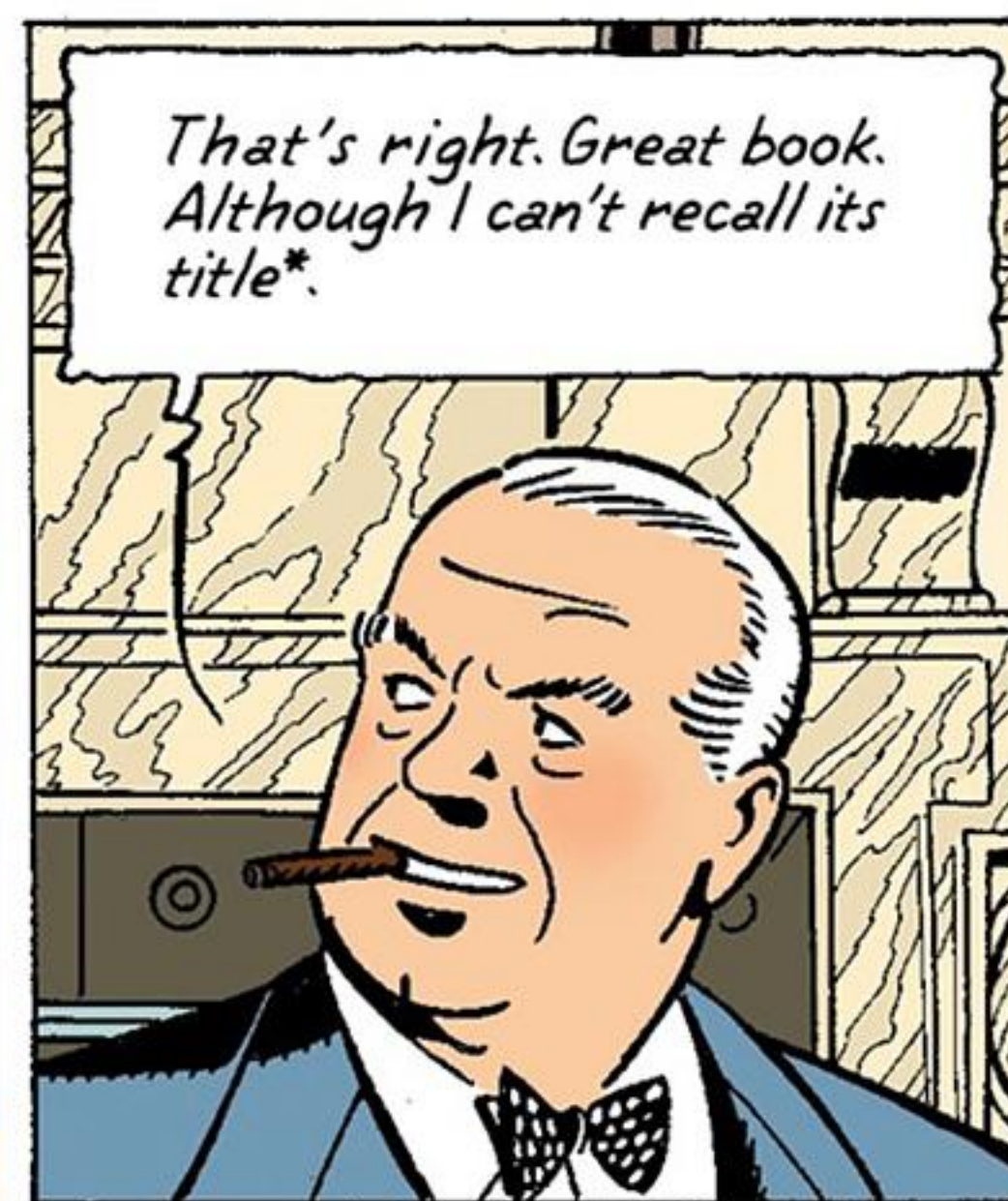


Septimus... I've seen this name before...

In a Virginia Woolf novel, Prime Minister.

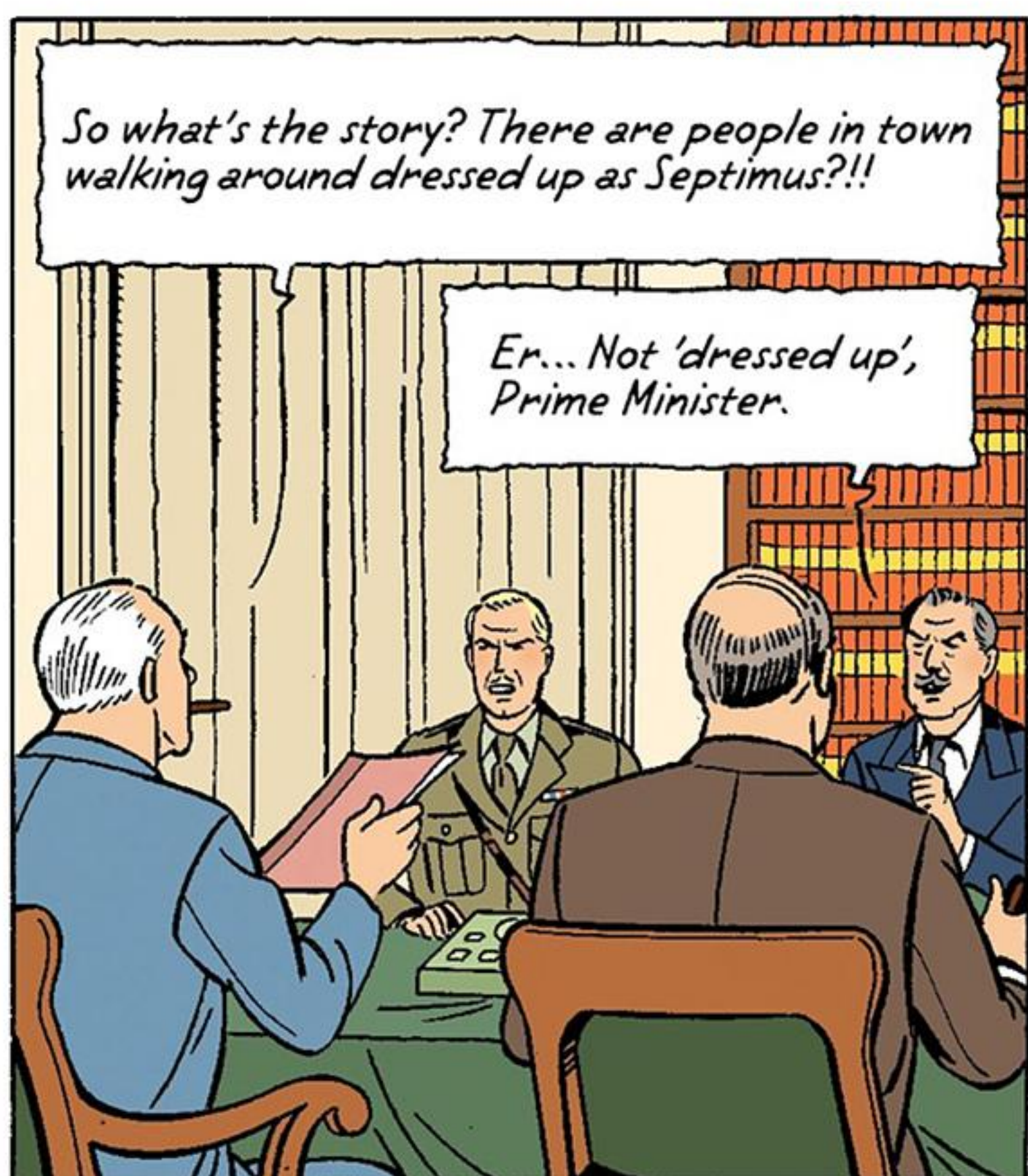


That's right. Great book. Although I can't recall its title*.

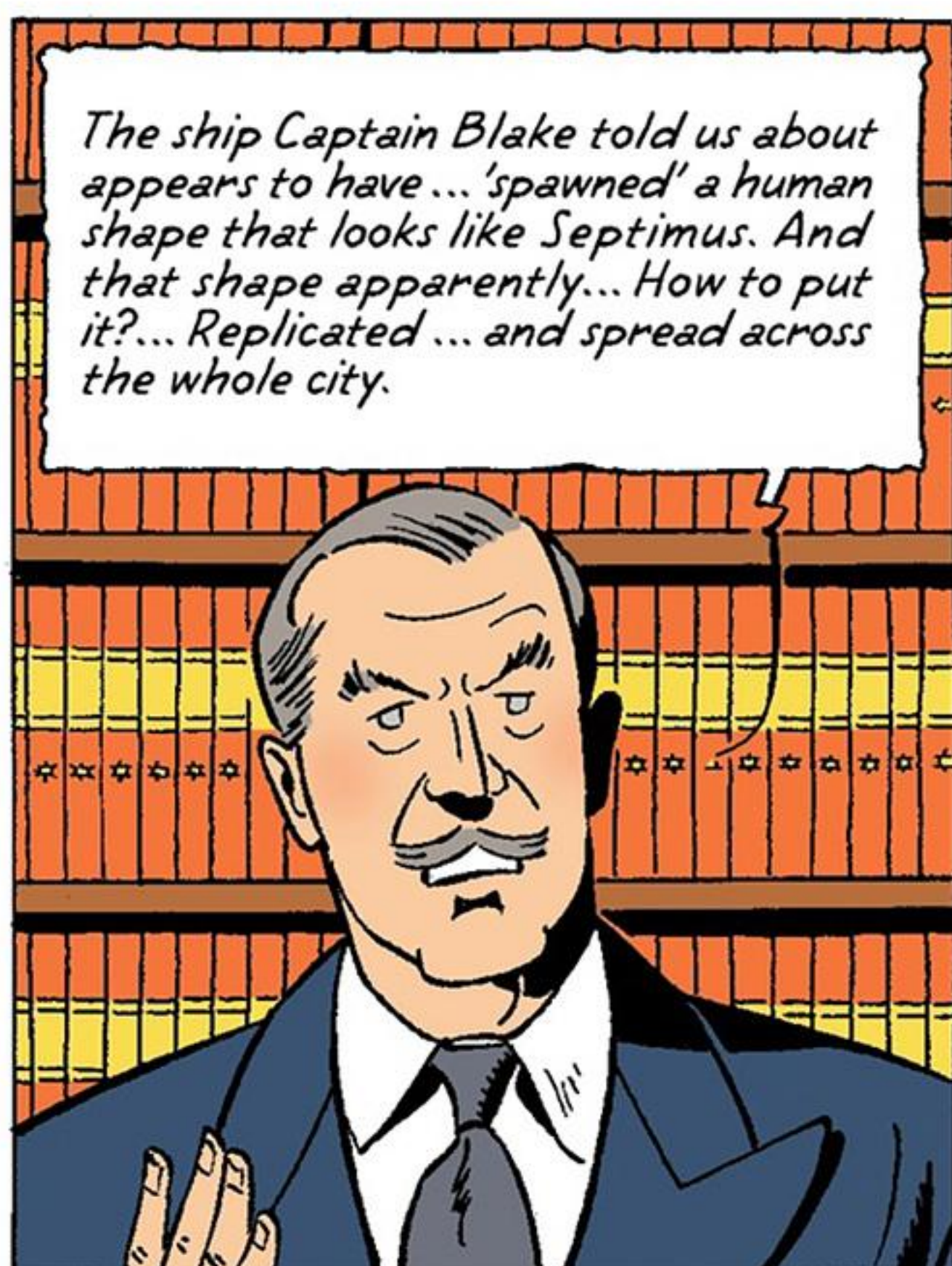


So what's the story? There are people in town walking around dressed up as Septimus?!!

Er... Not 'dressed up', Prime Minister.

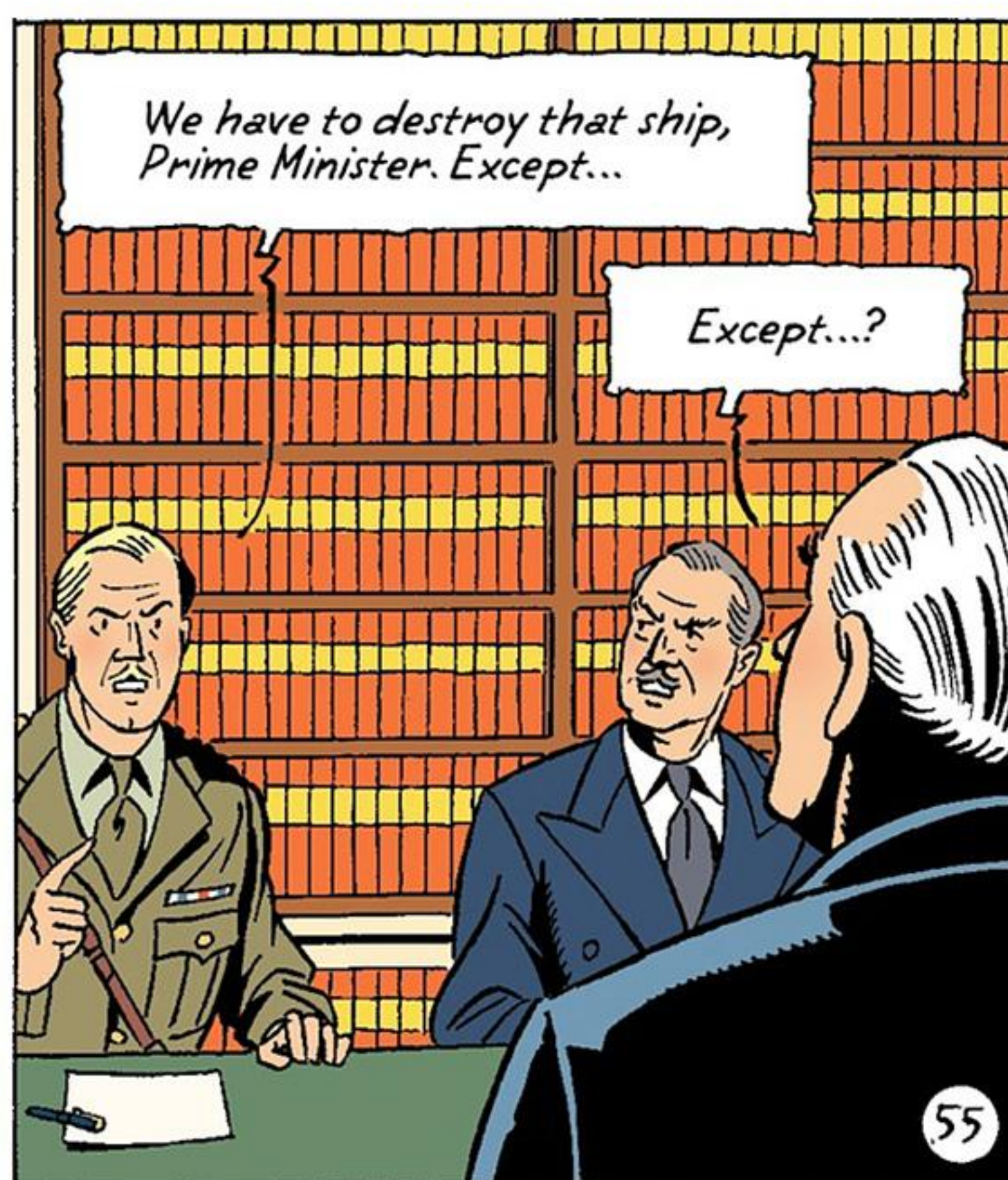


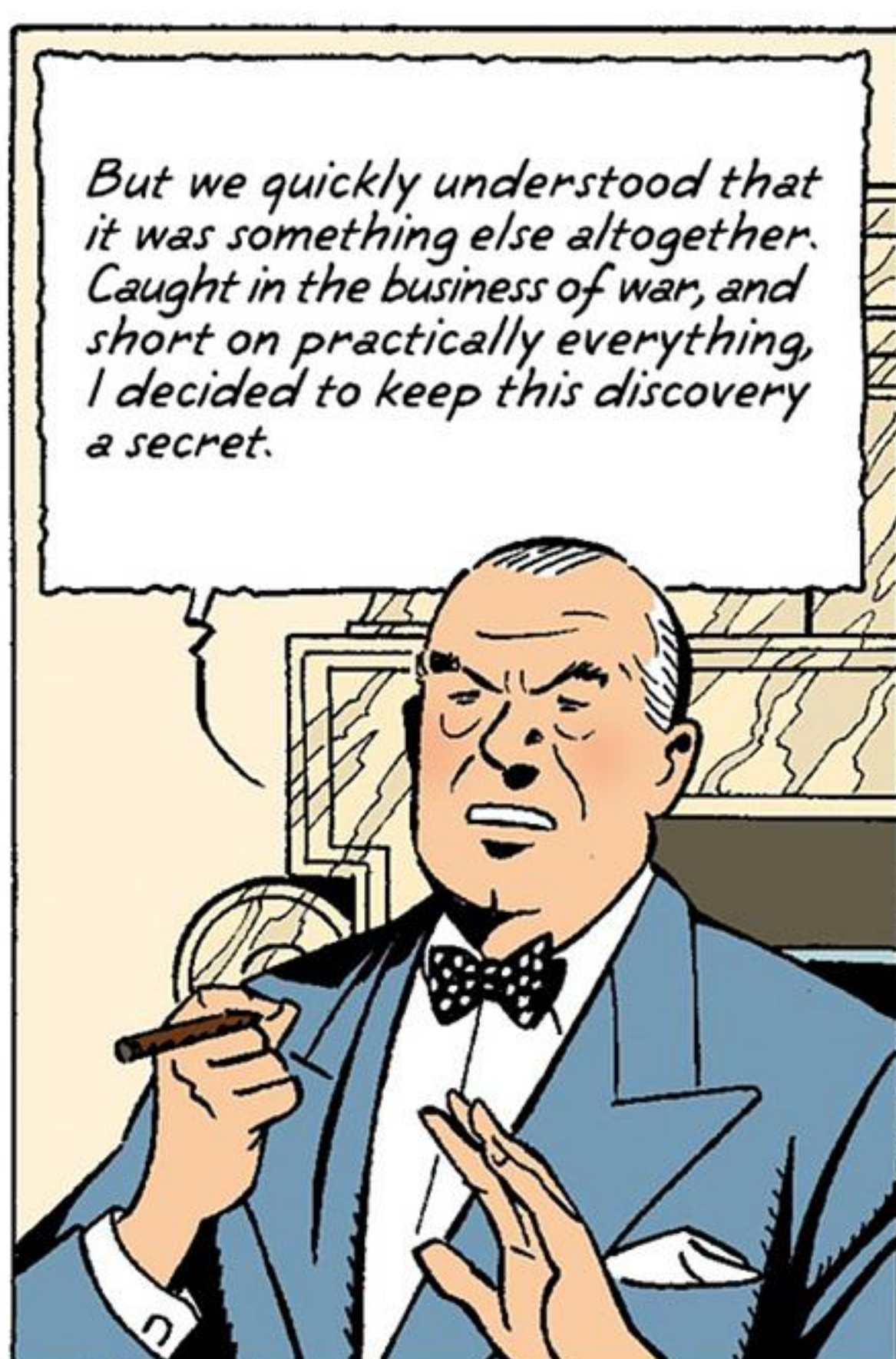
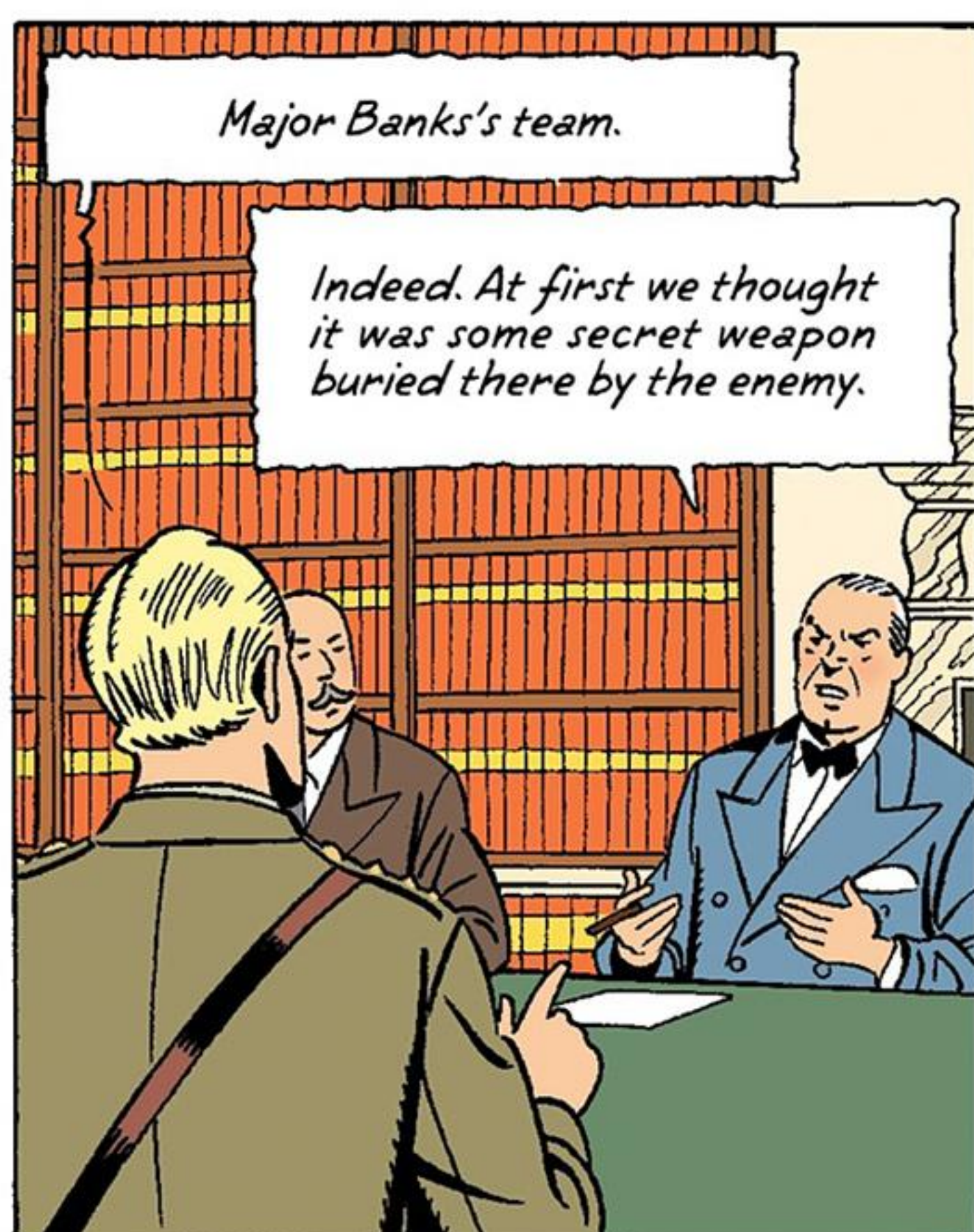
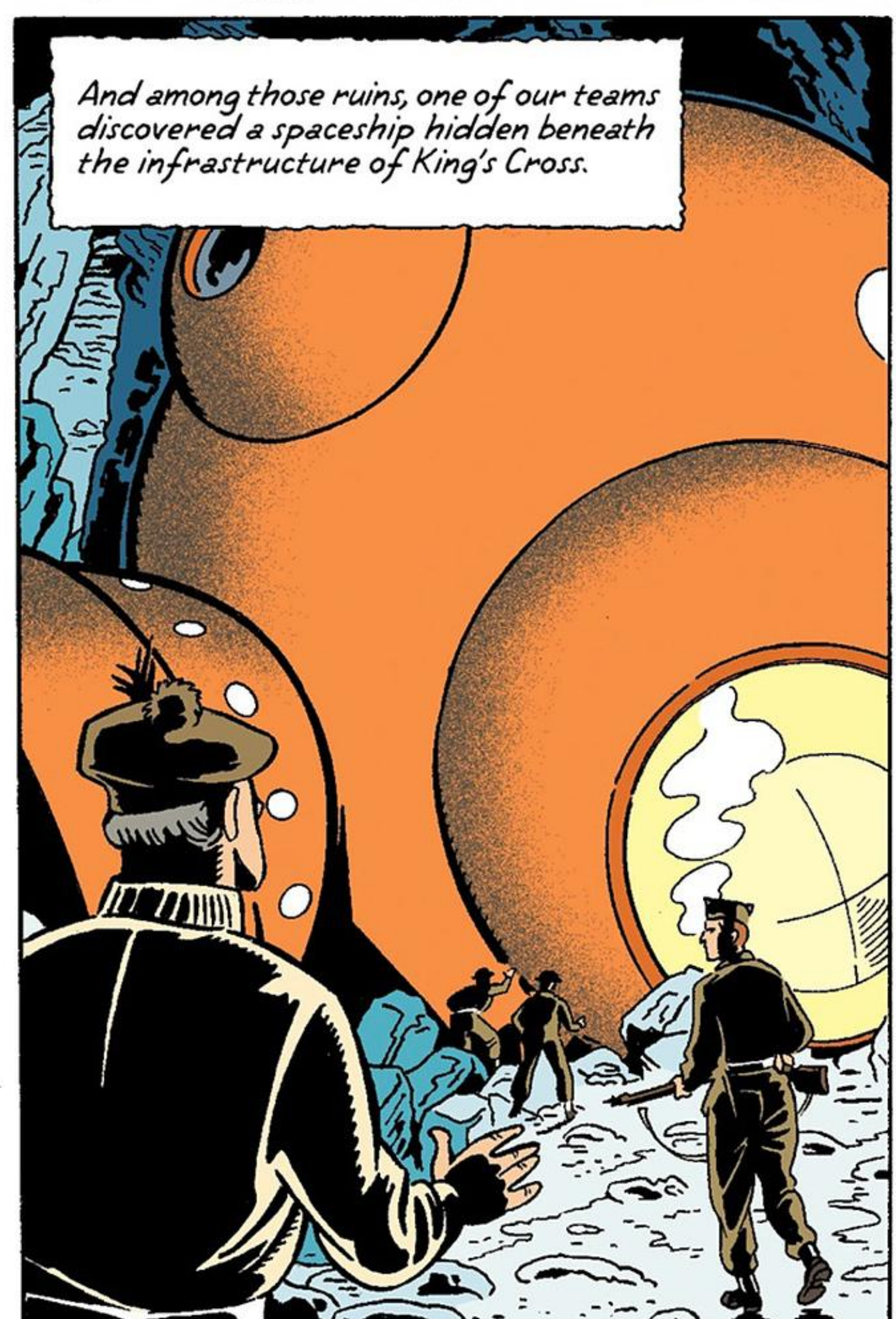
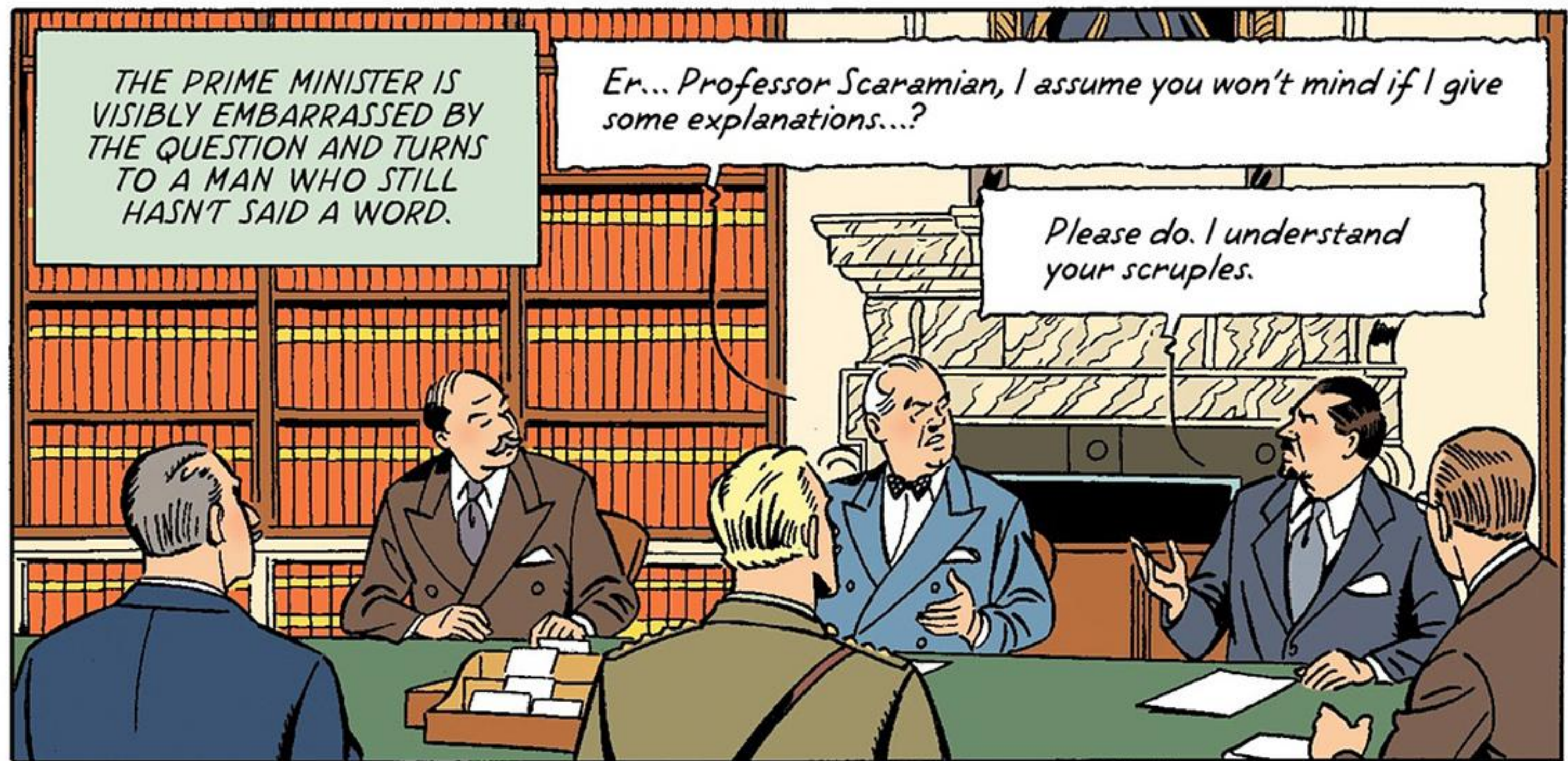
The ship Captain Blake told us about appears to have ... 'spawned' a human shape that looks like Septimus. And that shape apparently... How to put it?... Replicated ... and spread across the whole city.

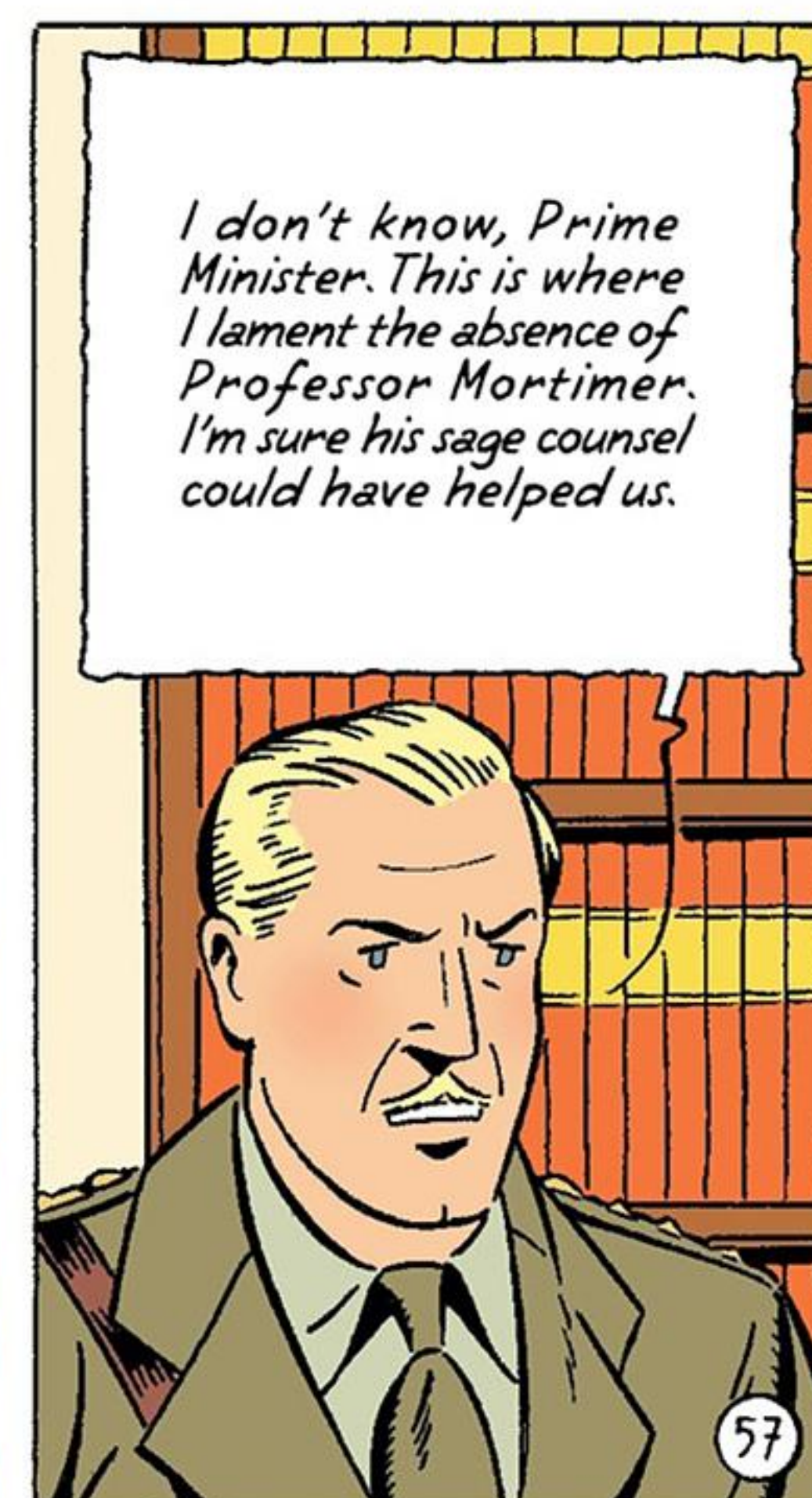
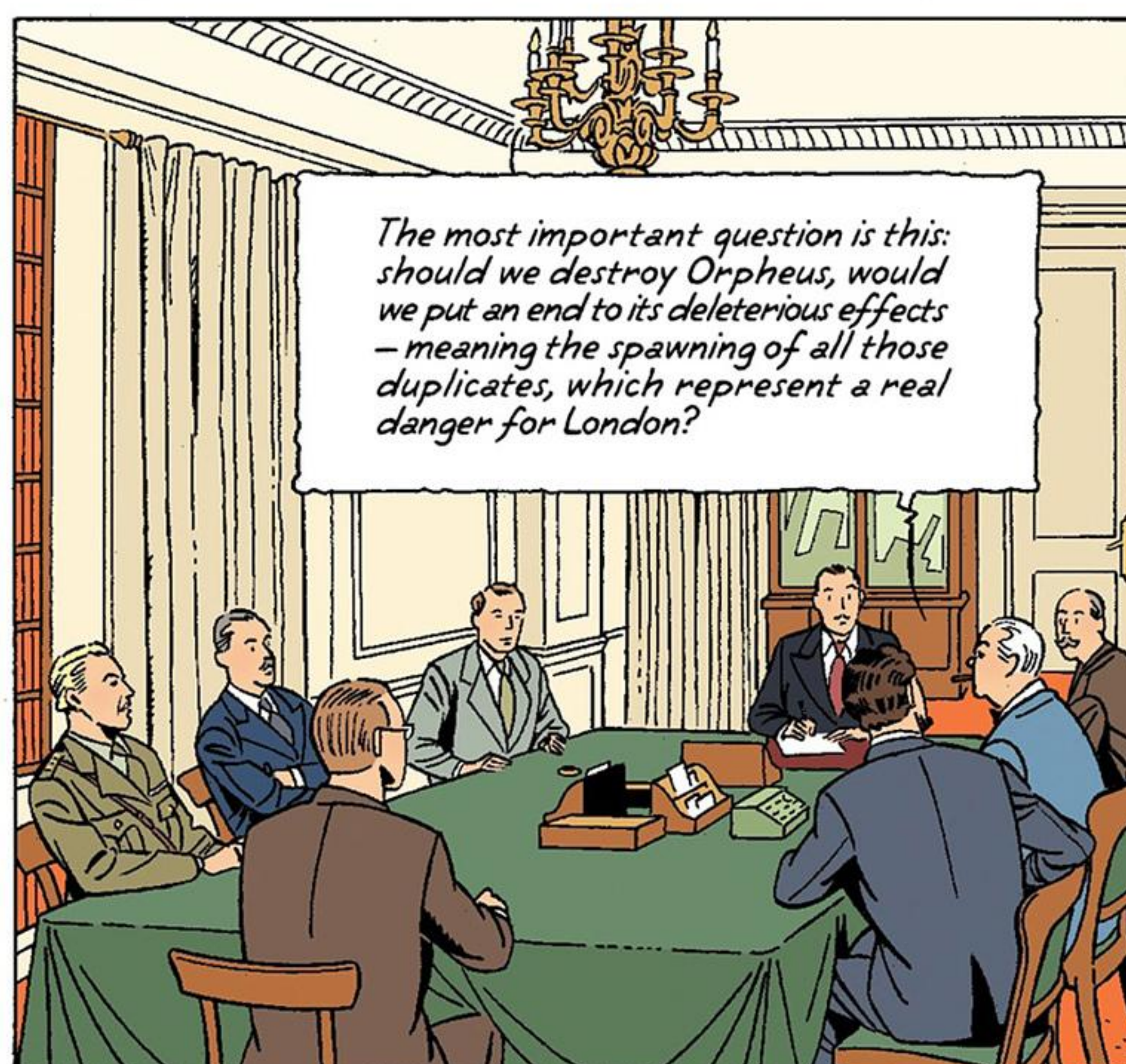
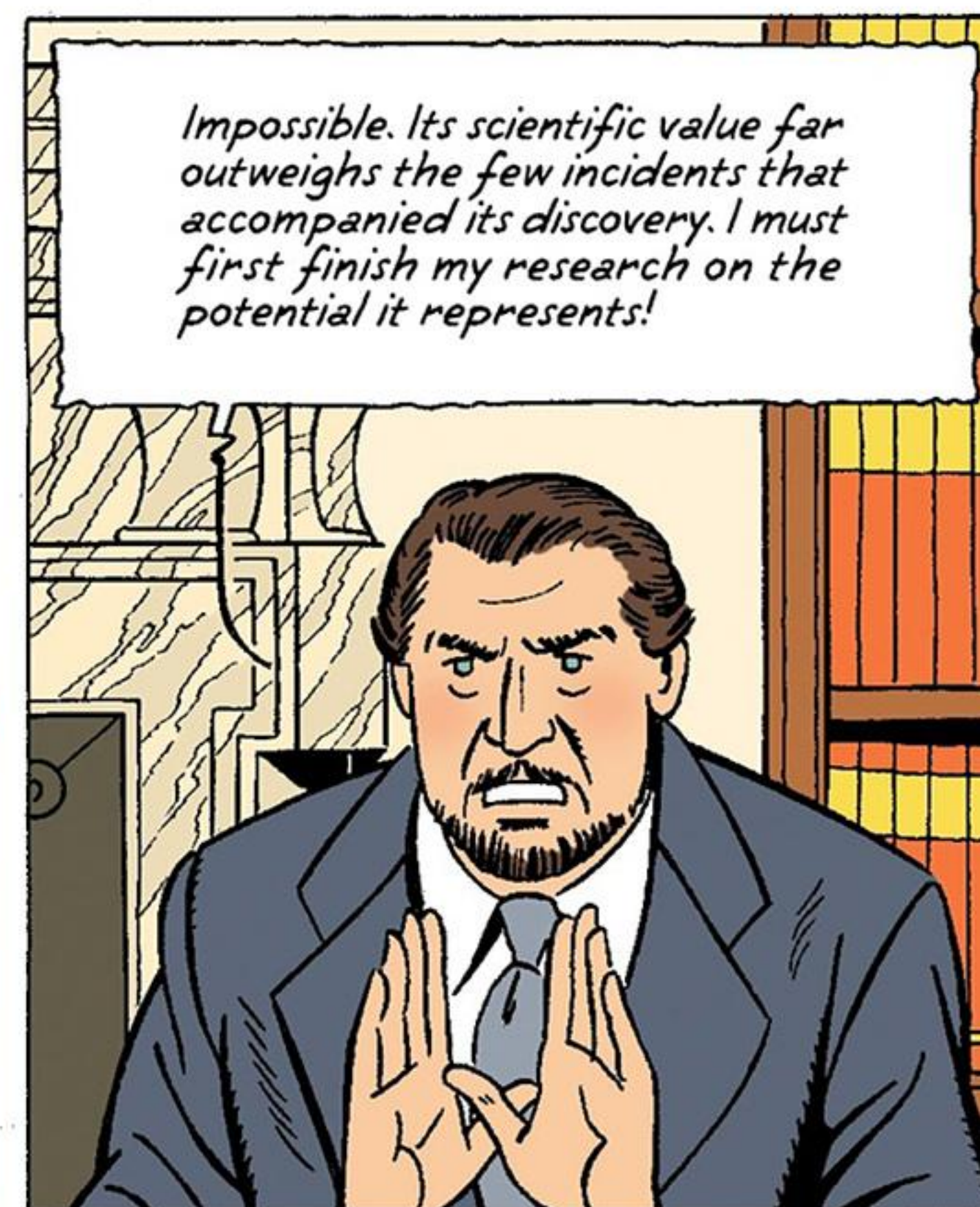
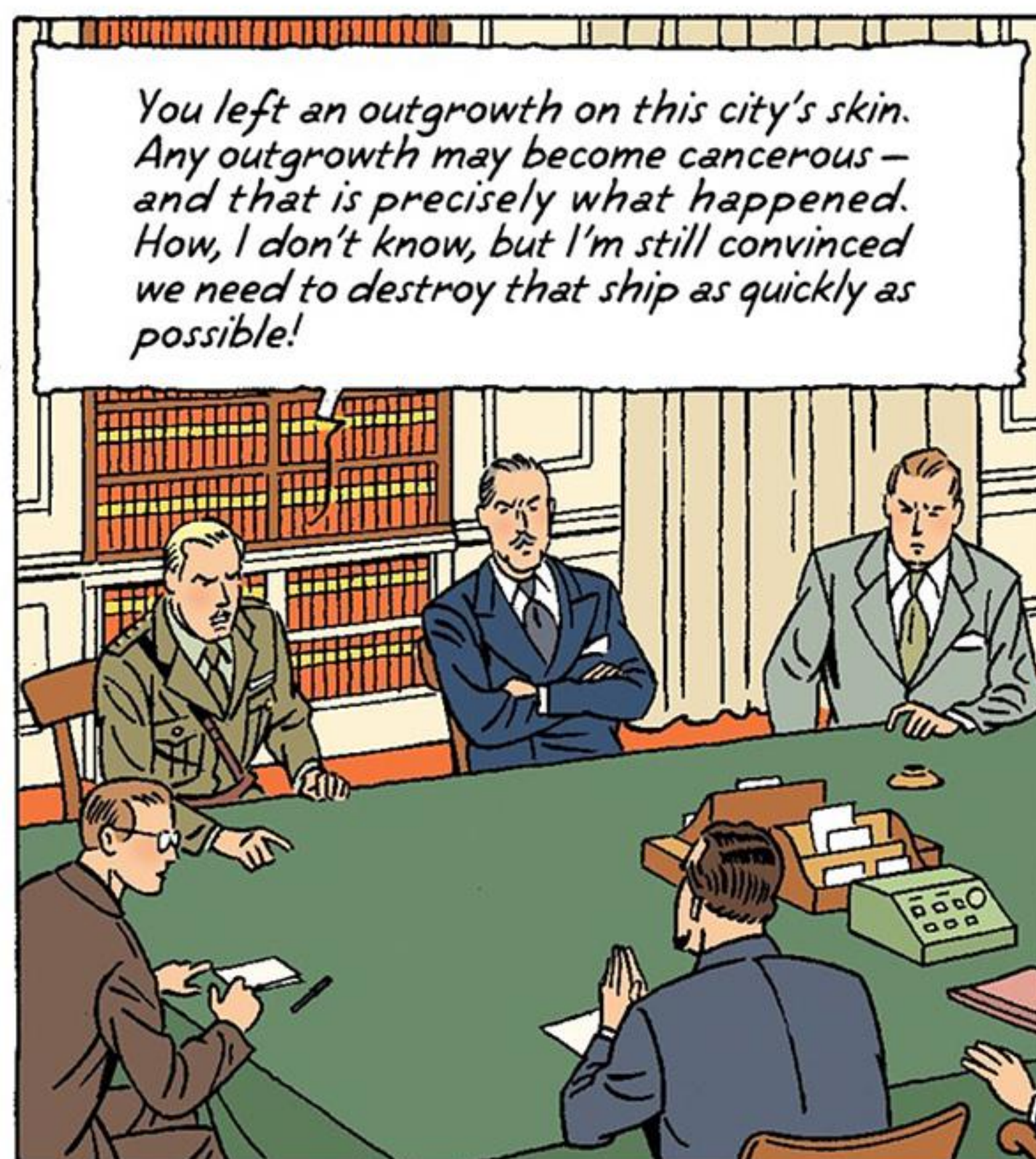
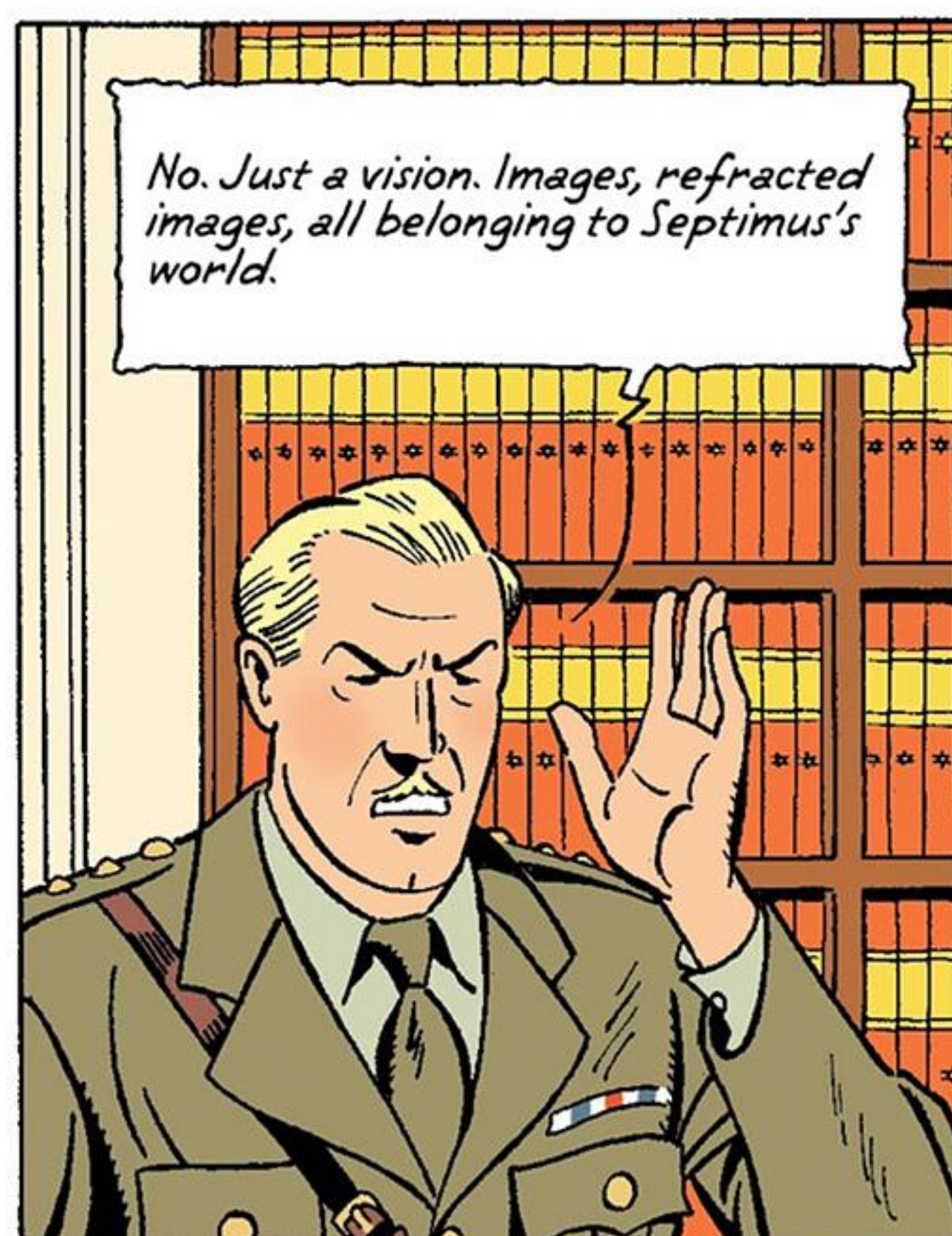
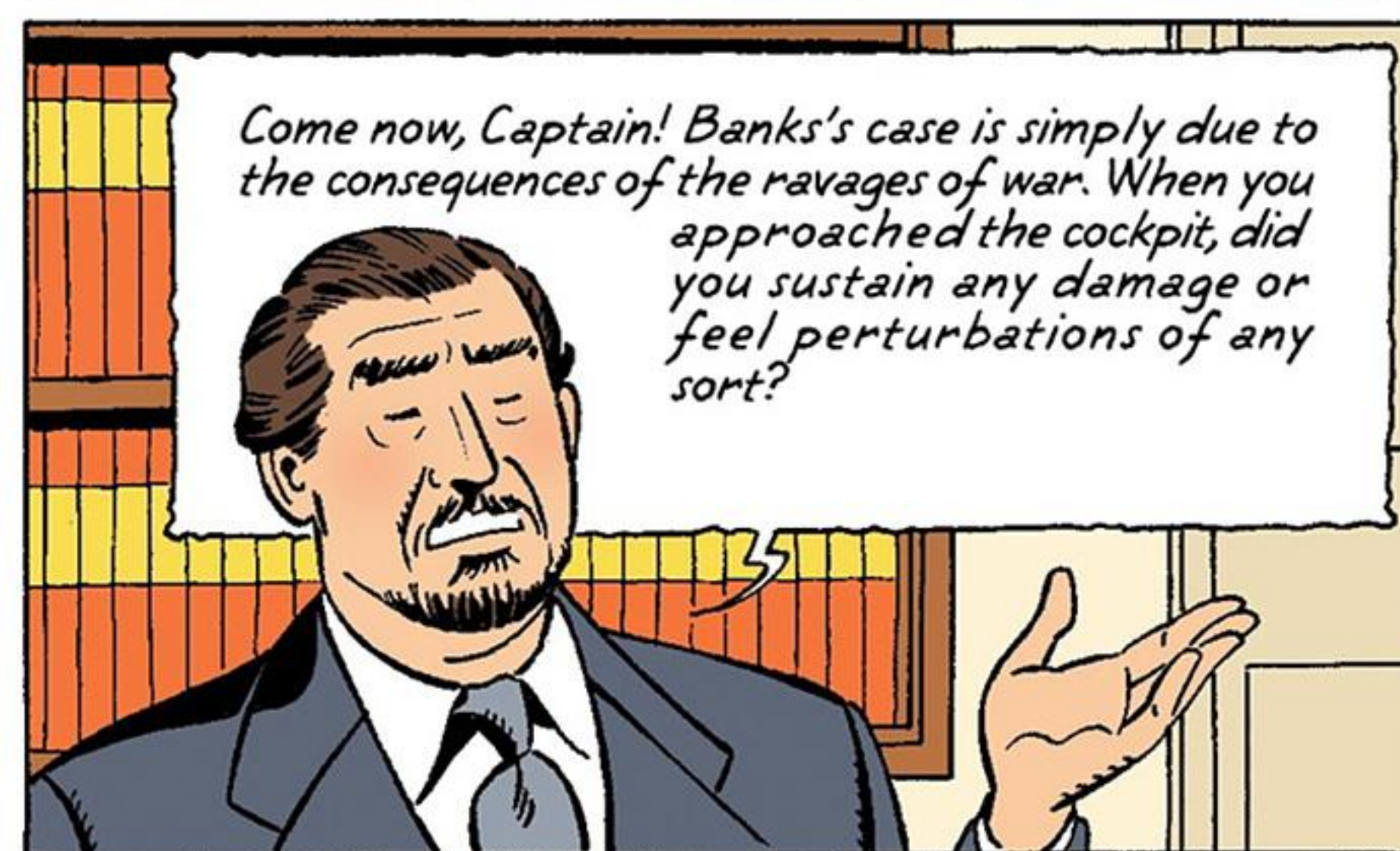
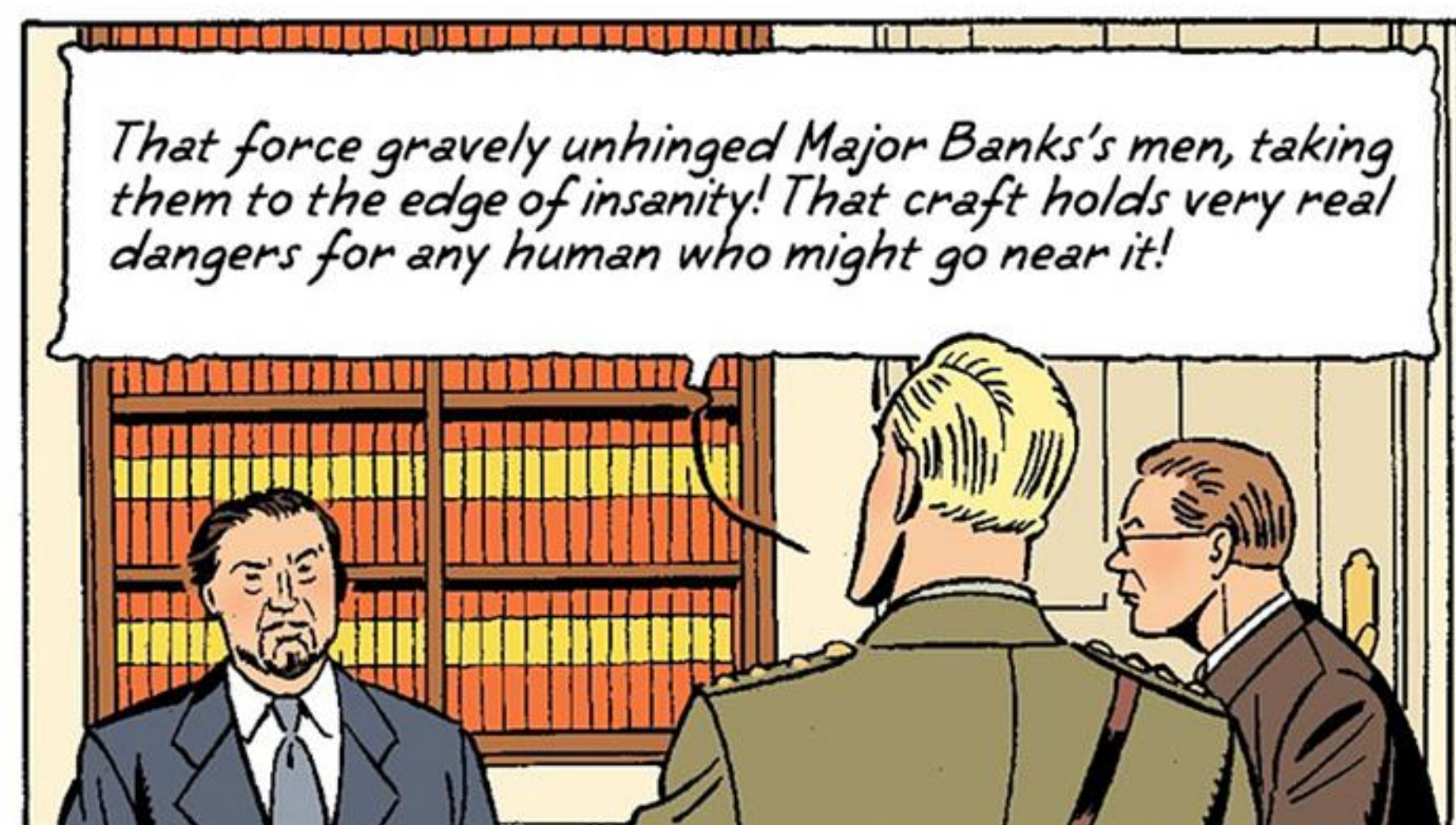
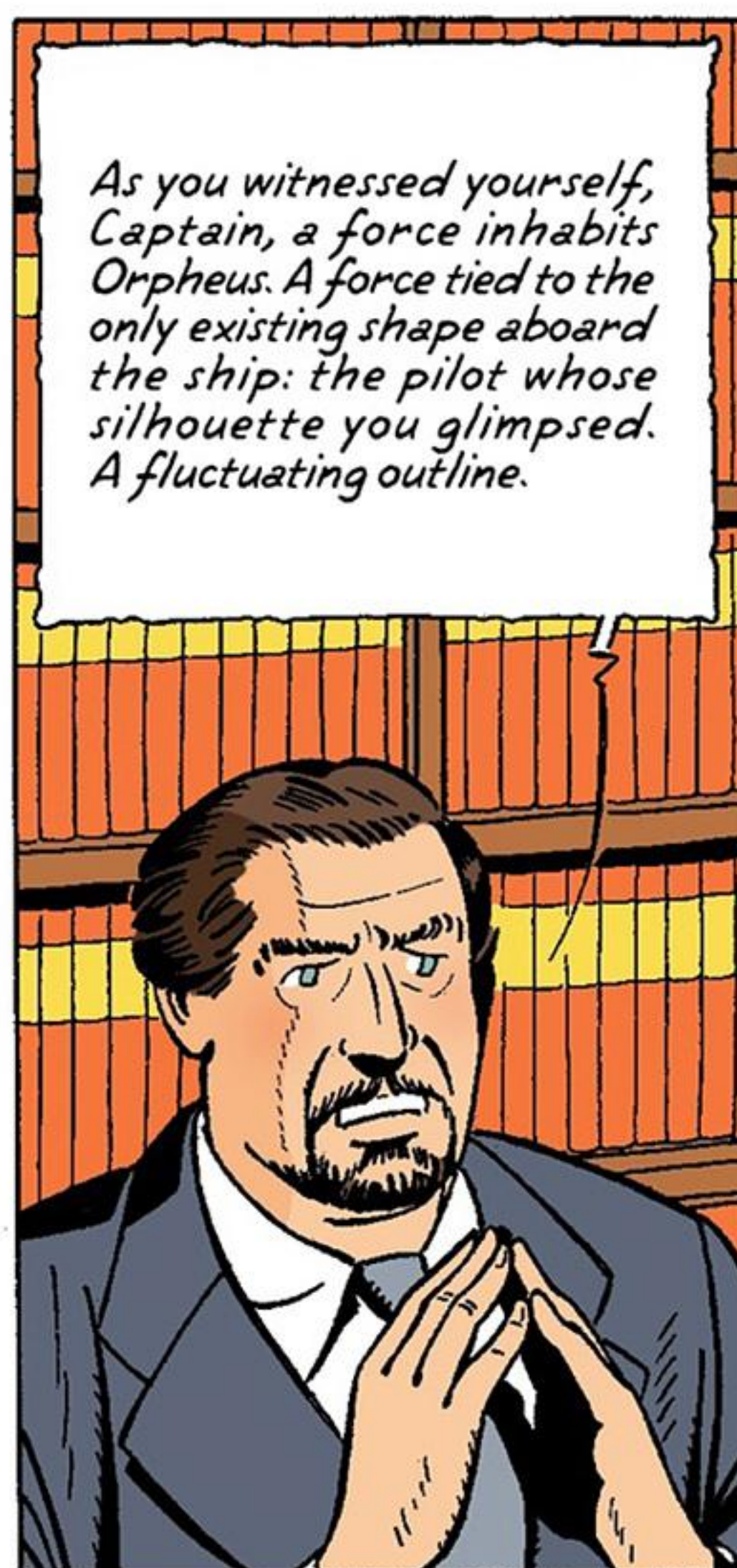
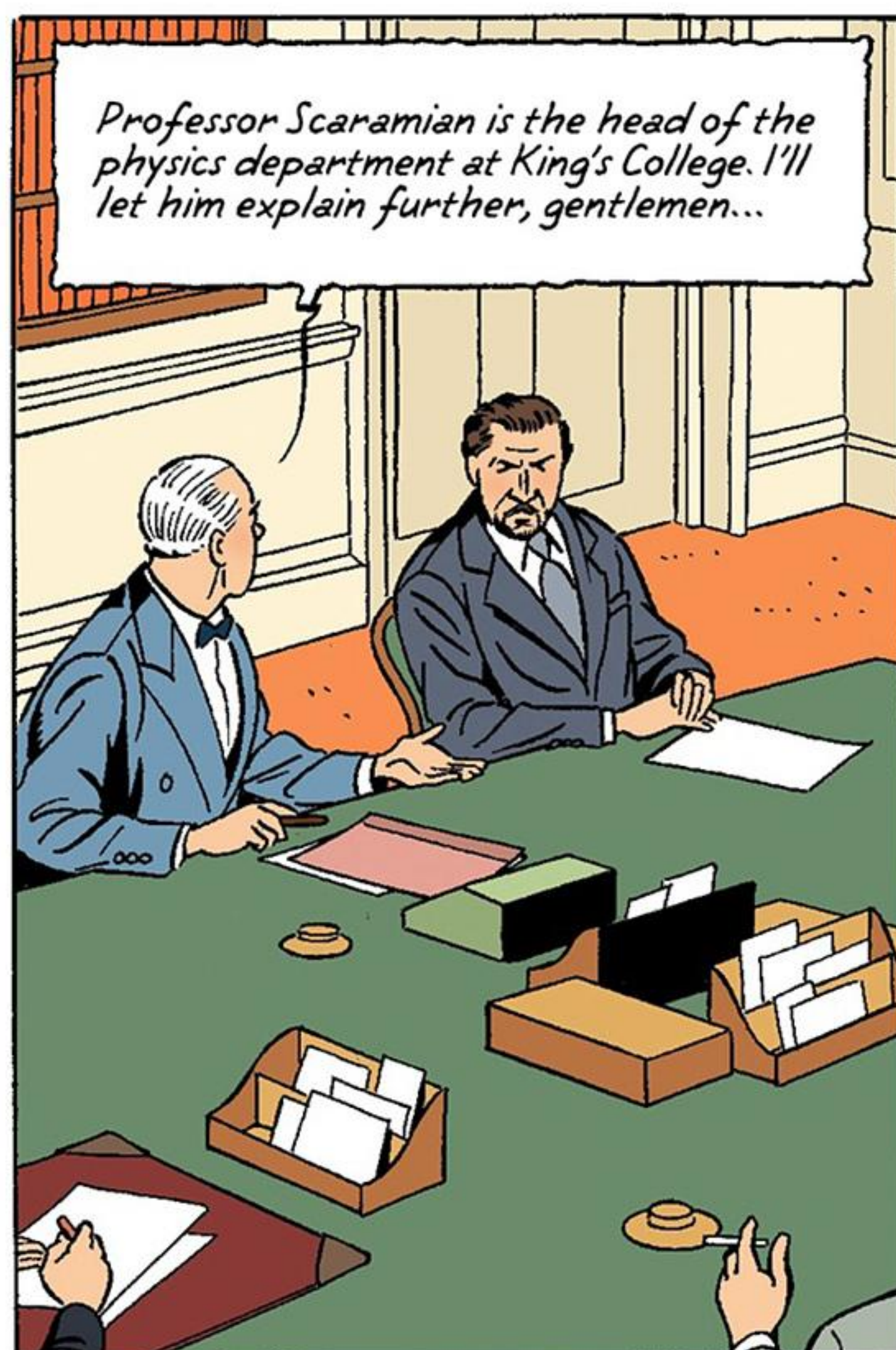


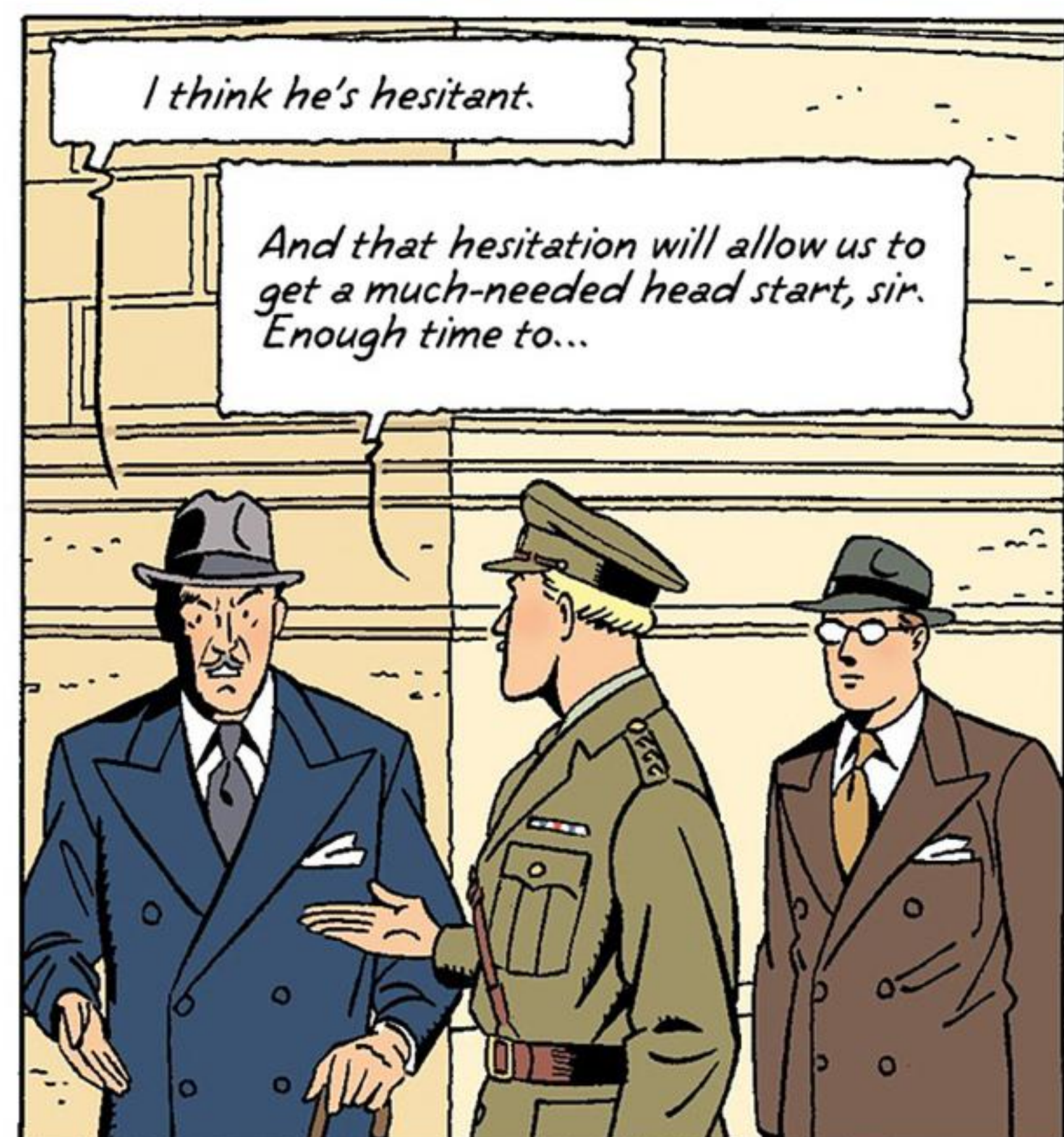
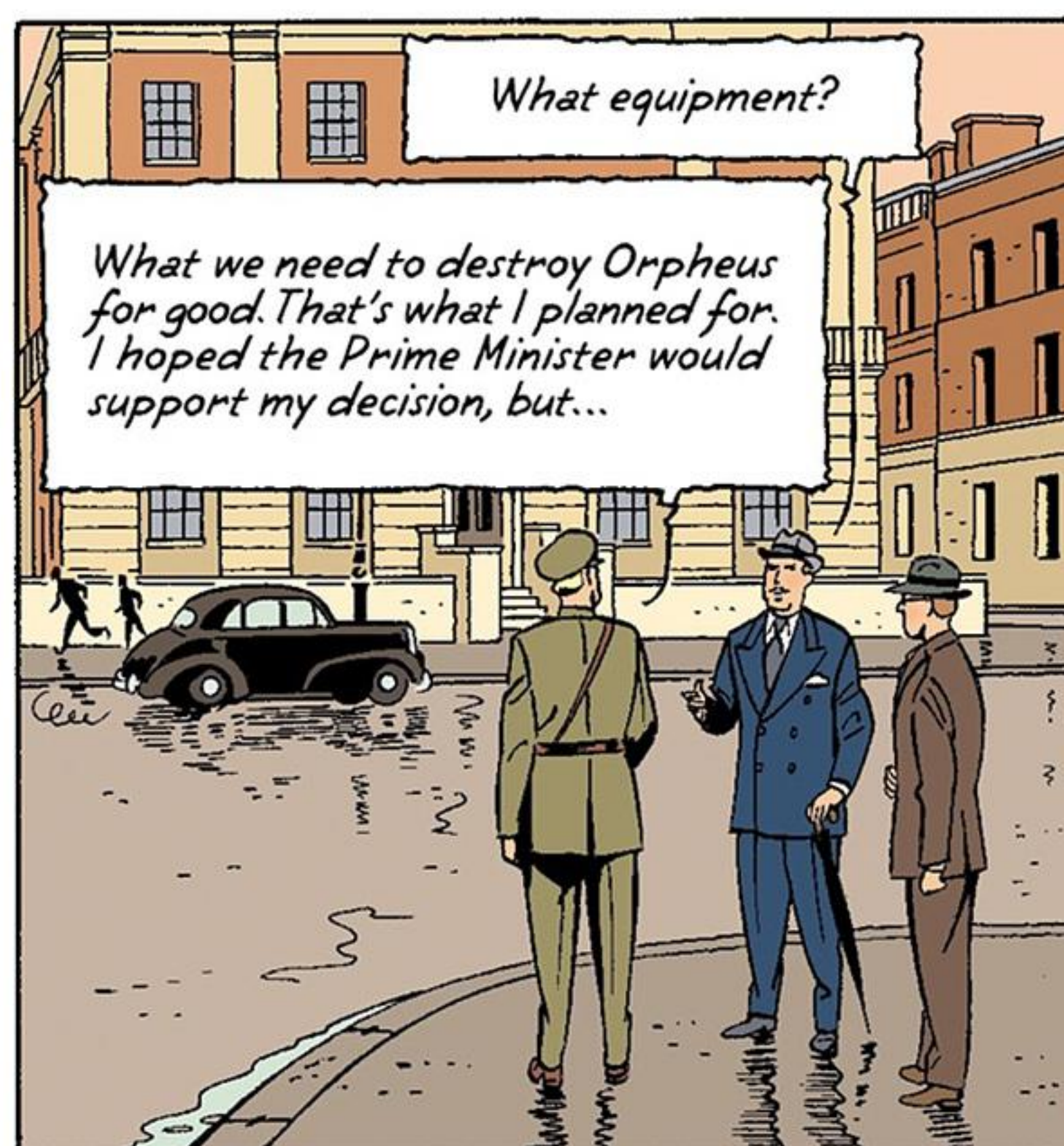
We have to destroy that ship, Prime Minister. Except...

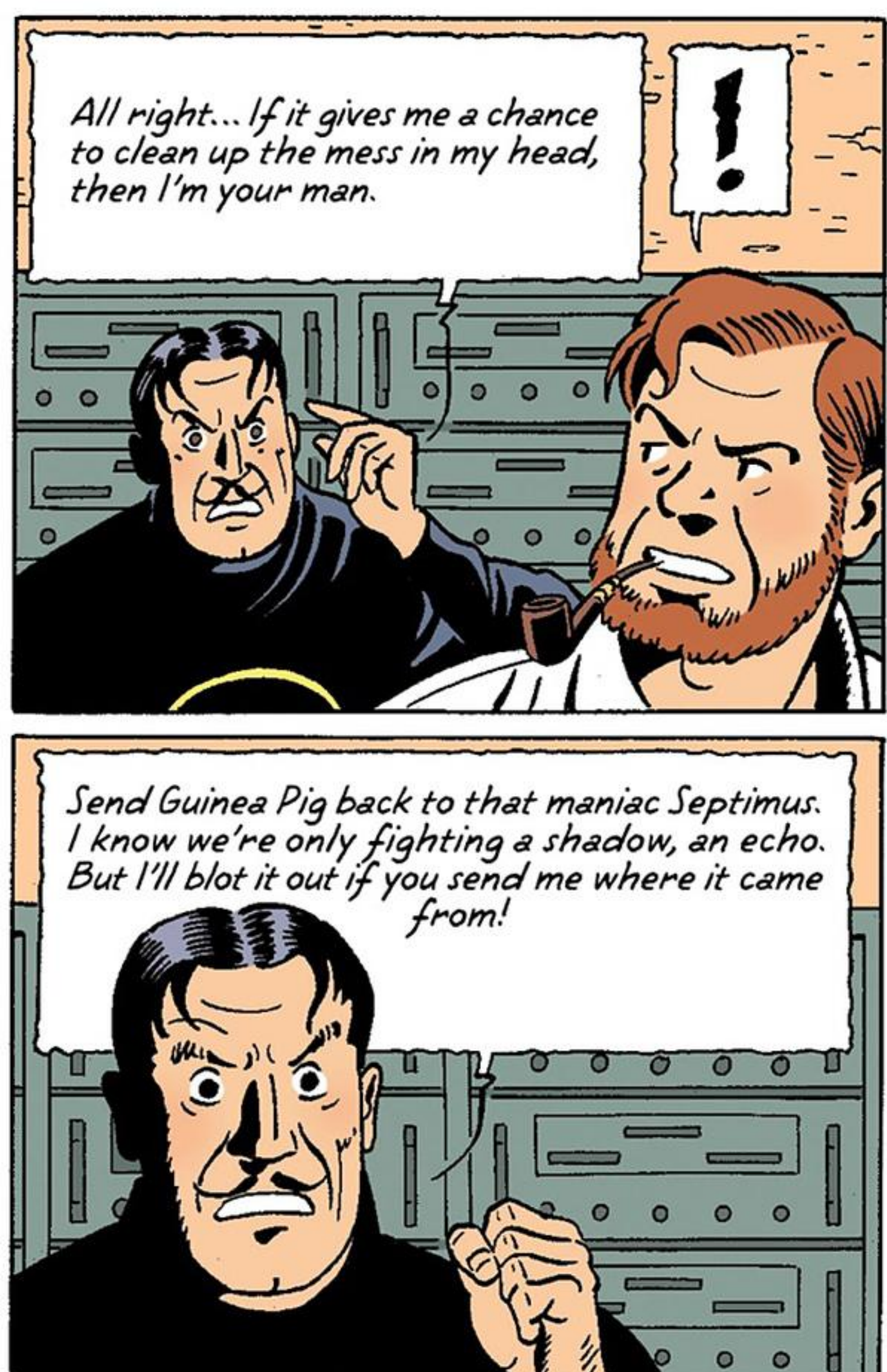
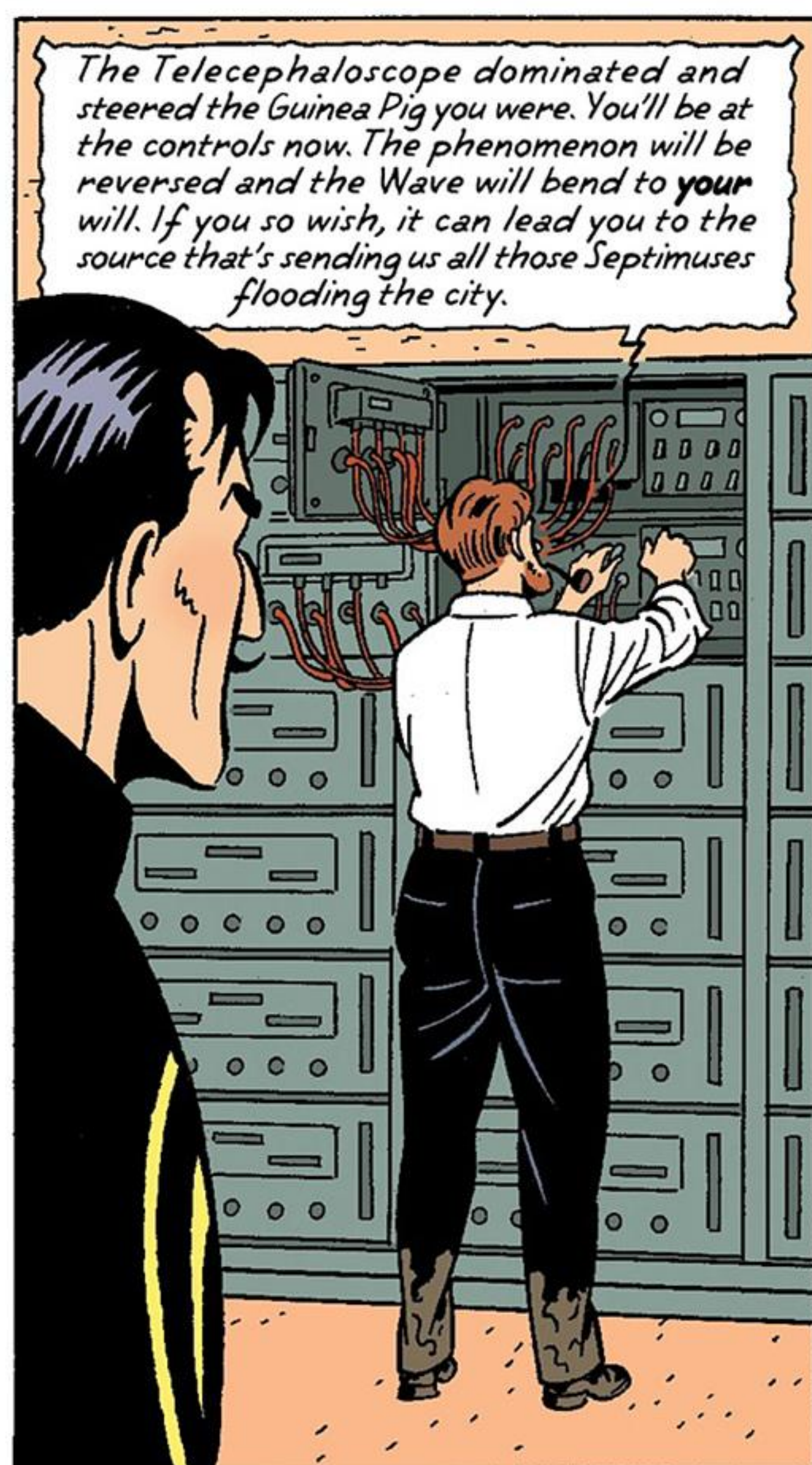
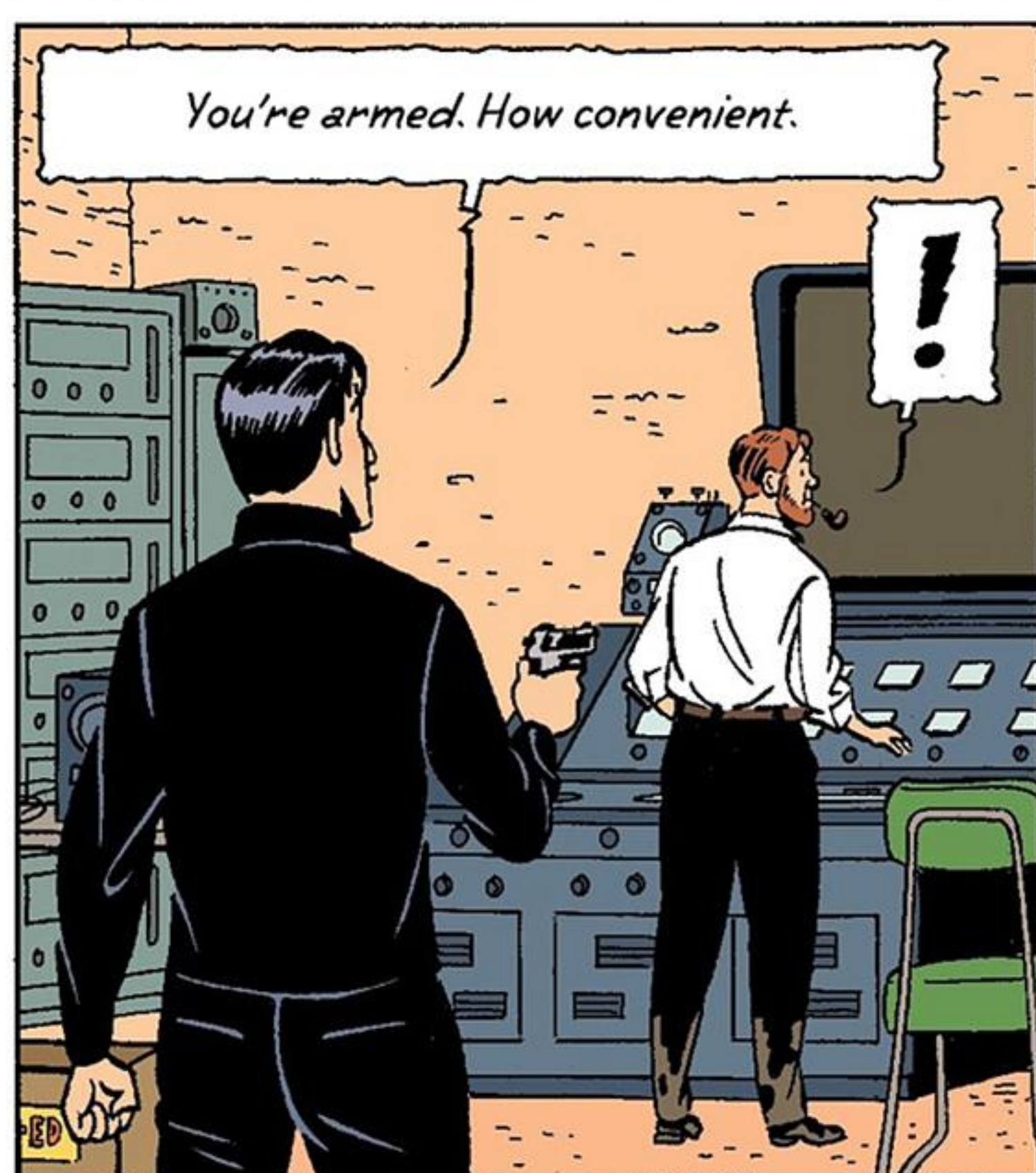
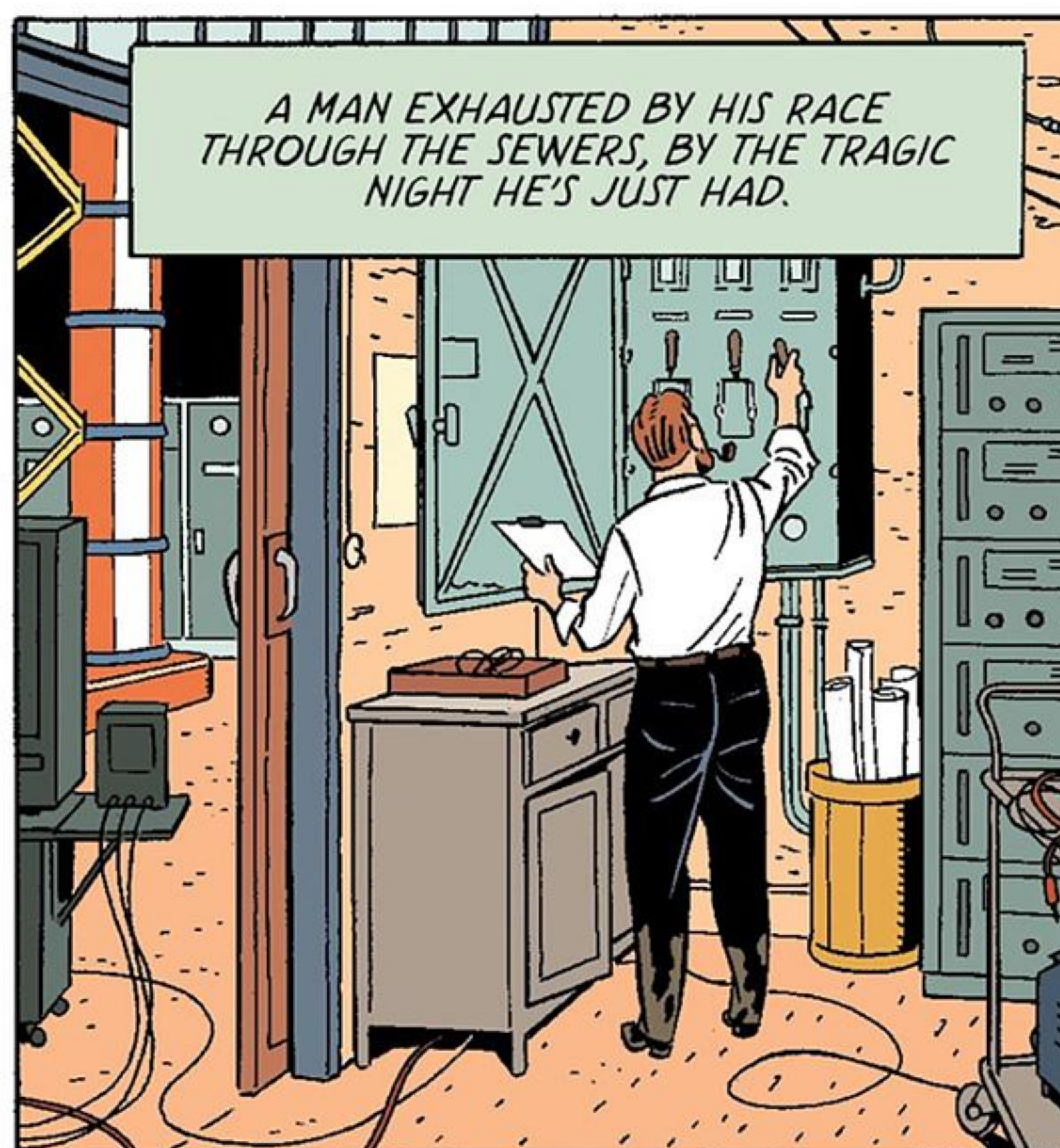
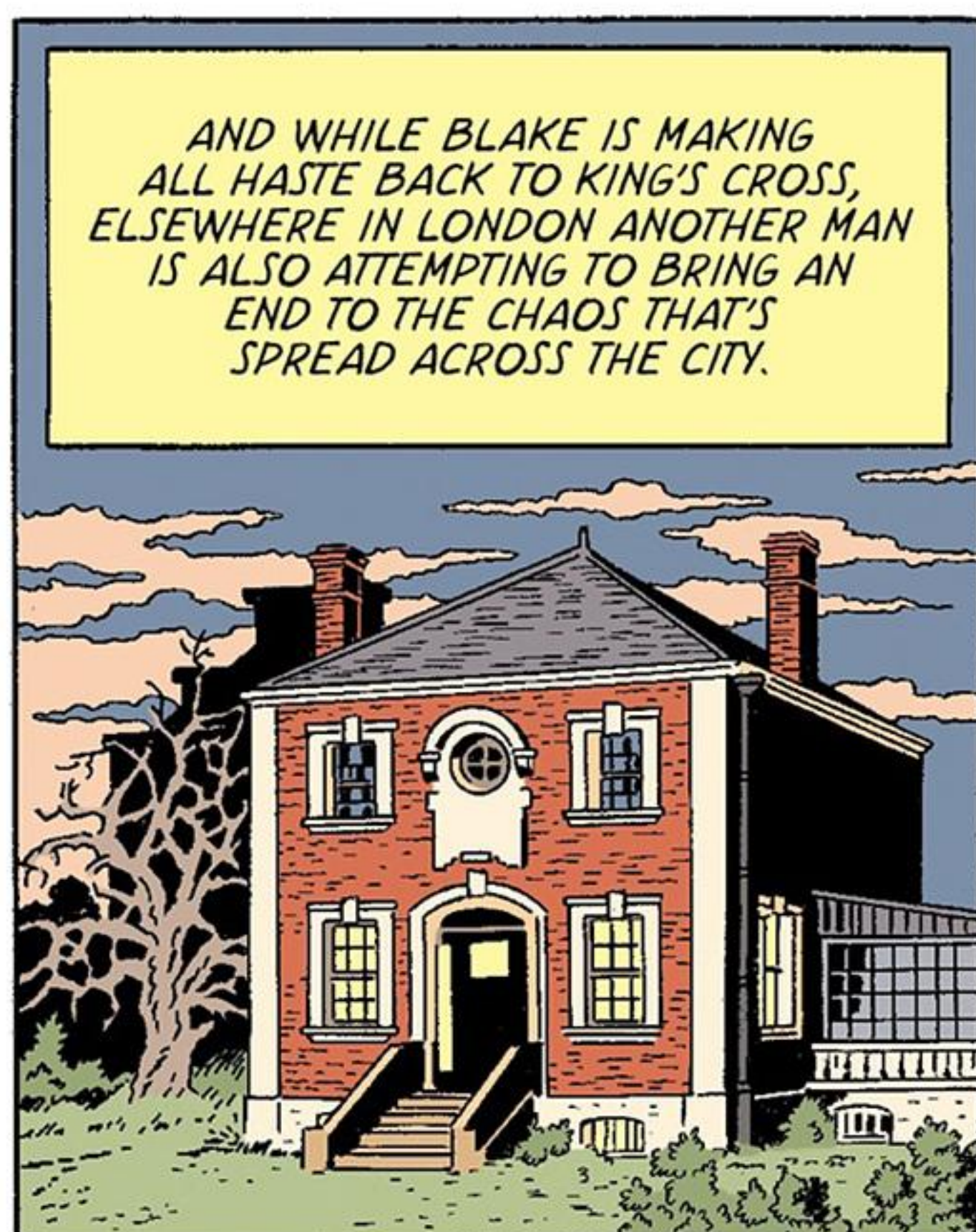
Except...?











SOMEWHAT IMPRESSED, MORTIMER STARES AT HIS OLD FOE. FOR NOW AT LEAST, OLRİK IS SHOWING TRUE COURAGE, EVEN IF IT IS TINGED WITH FATALISM.

I see you've recovered my old goggles and my coat – Guinea Pig's finery.

Silly, I know. I have a fondness for symbols.

As do I. The goggles will allow you to follow my movements – wherever they take me. We remain bound to one another, Professor...

I hope I come back... I'm not done with you yet, you see.

It's possible I might miss you. Although I can't fathom why.

MORTIMER RETURNS TO HIS ADJUSTING, CHANGING THE ORIENTATION OF THE TELECEPHALOSCOPE'S IMPULSES.

Ready? This is going to be rough!

Go ahead! I've always been welcome in Hell!

THE SCREEN BEGINS TO DISPLAY OLRİK'S IMAGE, EVEN AS MORTIMER FOCUSES THE SEPTIMUS WAVE ON THE COLONEL.

STRAIGHT AWAY, A FLASH OF LIGHTNING SURROUNDS OLRİK, WHO SCREAMS IN PAIN...

...WHILE HIS FACE BREAKS UP AND WAVERS...

...BEFORE BEING REPLACED BY PROFESSOR SEPTIMUS'S HORRIBLE GRIN.

Guinea Pig?

Guinea Pig?

AND THE QUESTION ENDLESSLY, TIRELESSLY ASKED BY SEPTIMUS IS FINALLY ANSWERED BY GUINEA PIG!

Here I am, Master! Most illustrious, most great, most generous!

FINALLY REALISING THE RECKLESSNESS OF HIS ACT, MORTIMER IS VERY CLOSE TO TEARING HIS BEARD OFF IN DESPAIR. WHAT HE DOESN'T KNOW...

Good Lord! What have I done?!



...IS THAT HE'S SENT OLRİK TO FACE HIS DESTINY – JUST AS BLAKE AND HIS MEN ARE GETTING READY TO BLOW UP ORPHEUS!

How are we doing?

We have a problem, sir.



THE ROYAL ENGINEERS' SAPPER EXPLAINS THE SITUATION.

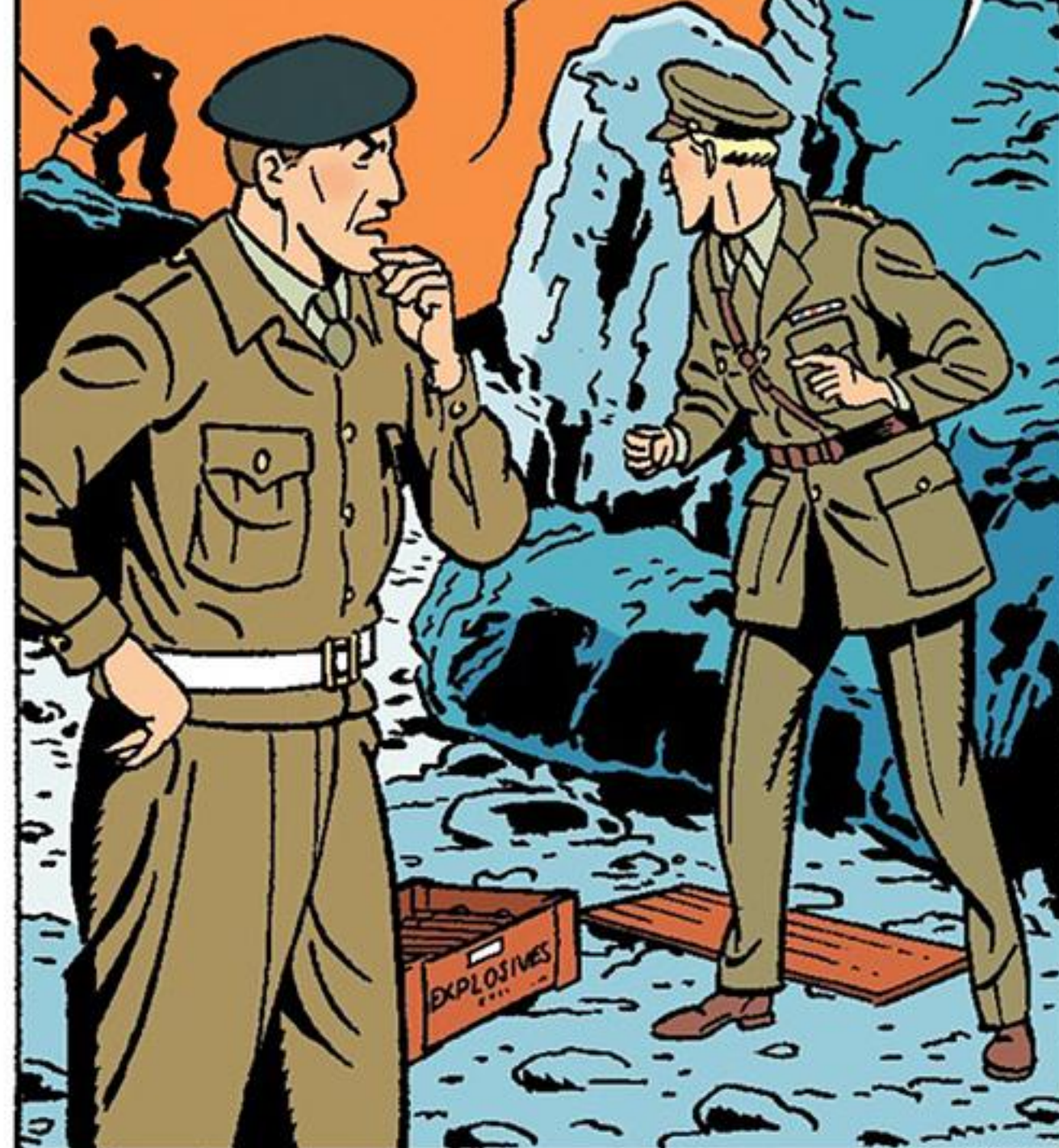
I calculate that the area we're in will not withstand the deflagration. The ceiling above us could collapse, causing a landslide near King's Cross. Which would be a disaster.

Blast!



What if I go after Orpheus's heart? The cockpit?

The risks will be greatly decreased. We can attempt an implosion, which would cause less collateral damage.



Is there a weak spot to place the charges?

A translucent column some two yards in diameter.



Good. In that case, we'll use an explosive belt. C3, with a central timed detonator.

Perfect. I'll put it in place myself.



As for you, Millovich, head back up and take charge of evacuating the area. We'll wait for your green light before we act. But make haste!

Yes, sir!

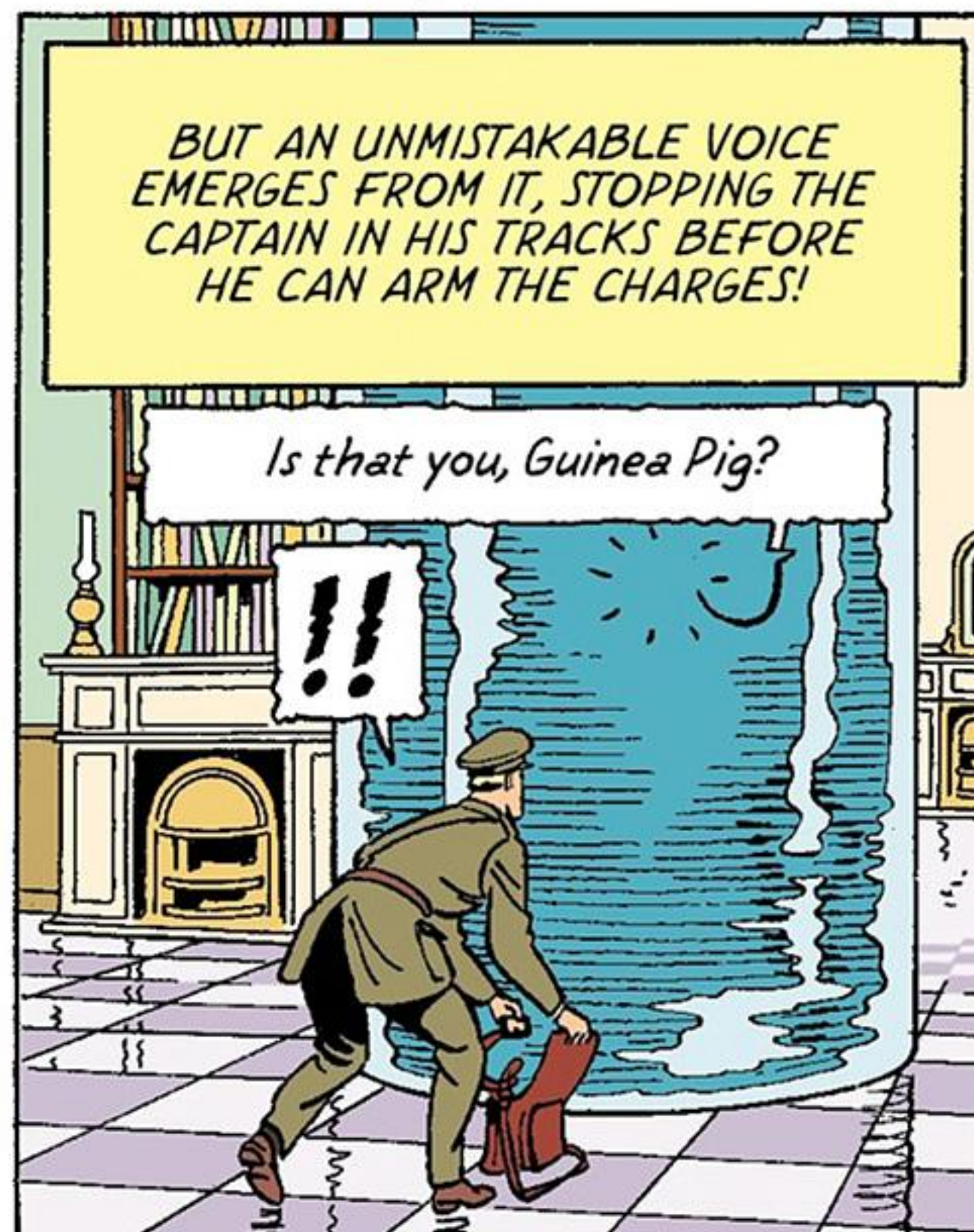
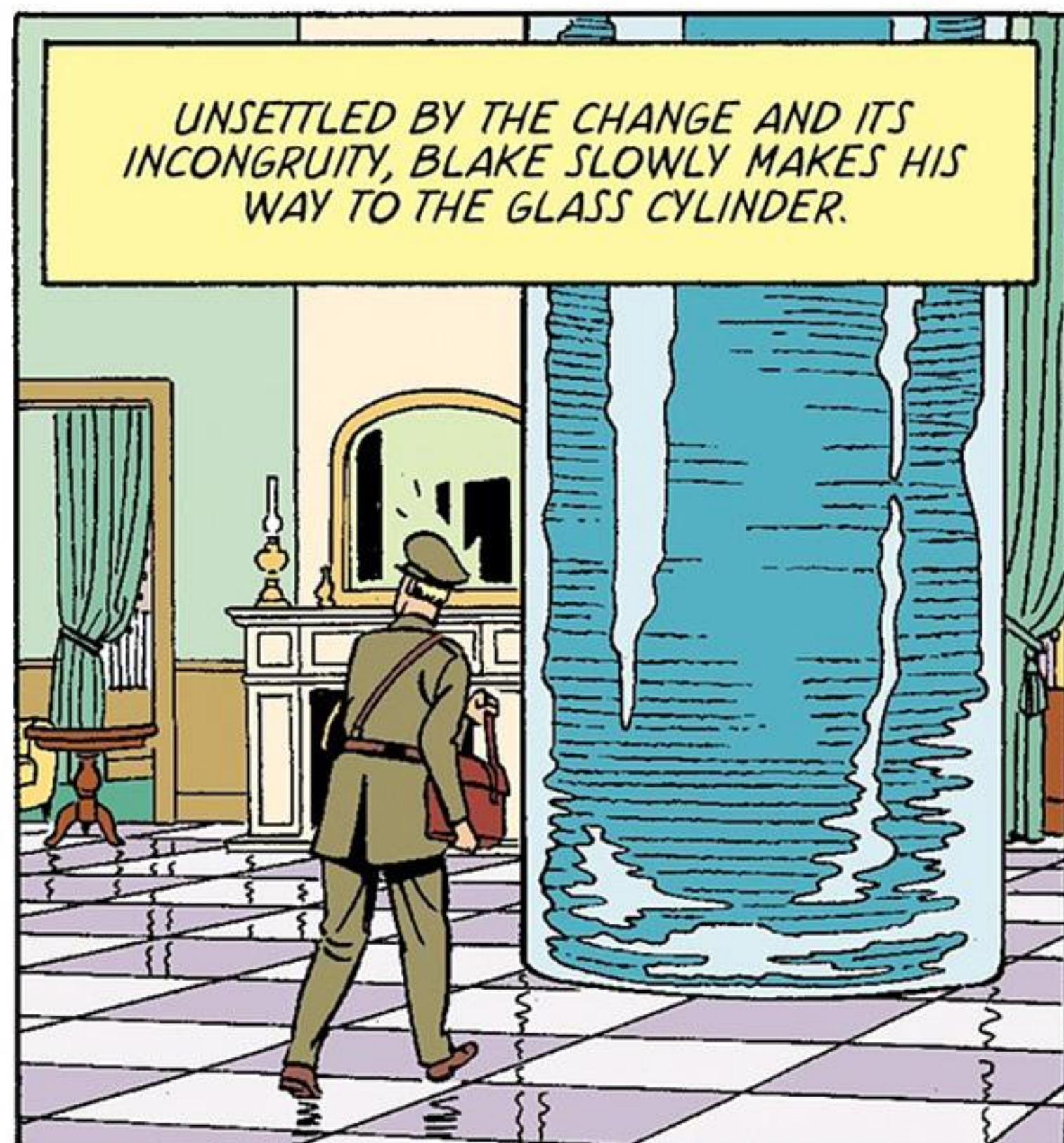


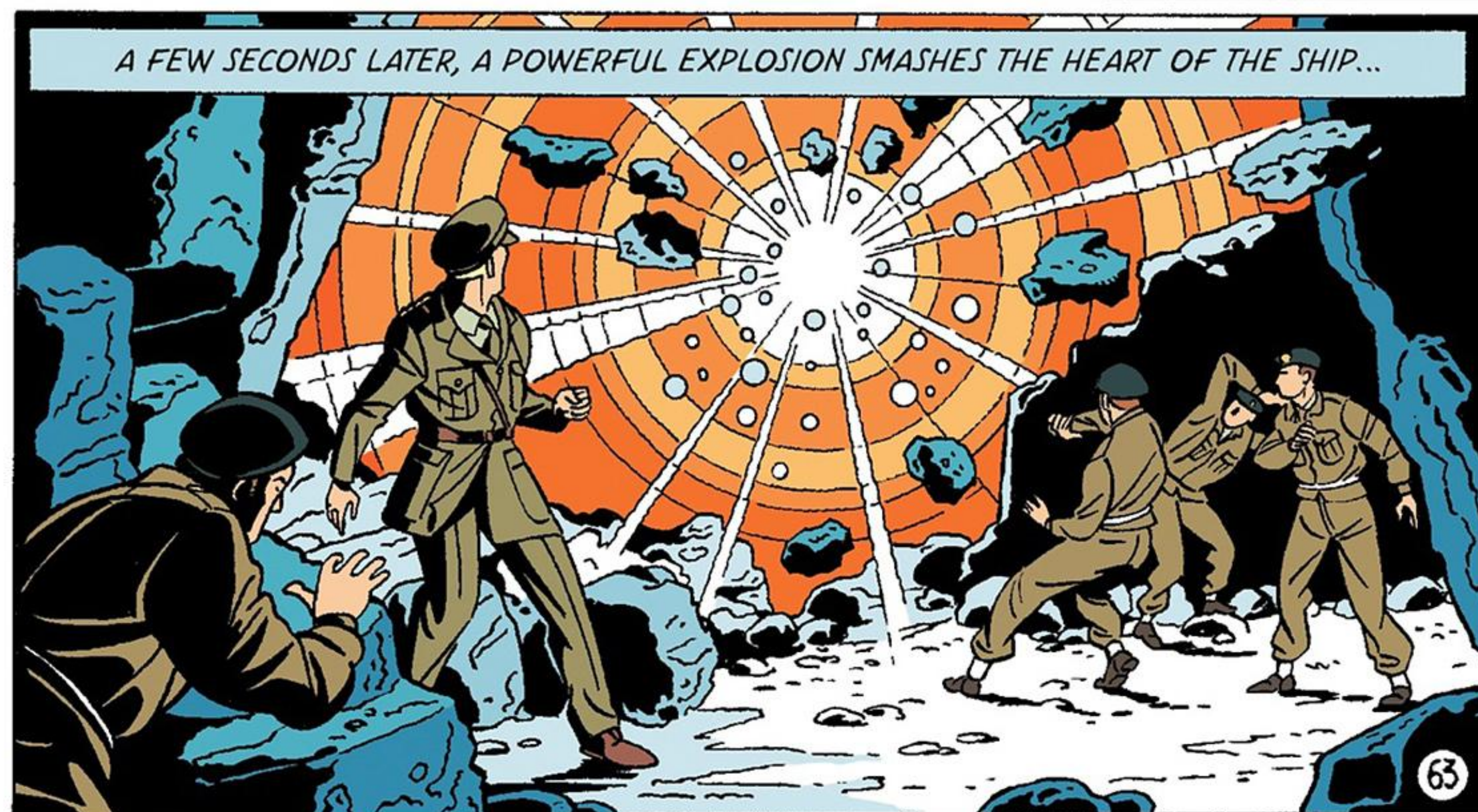
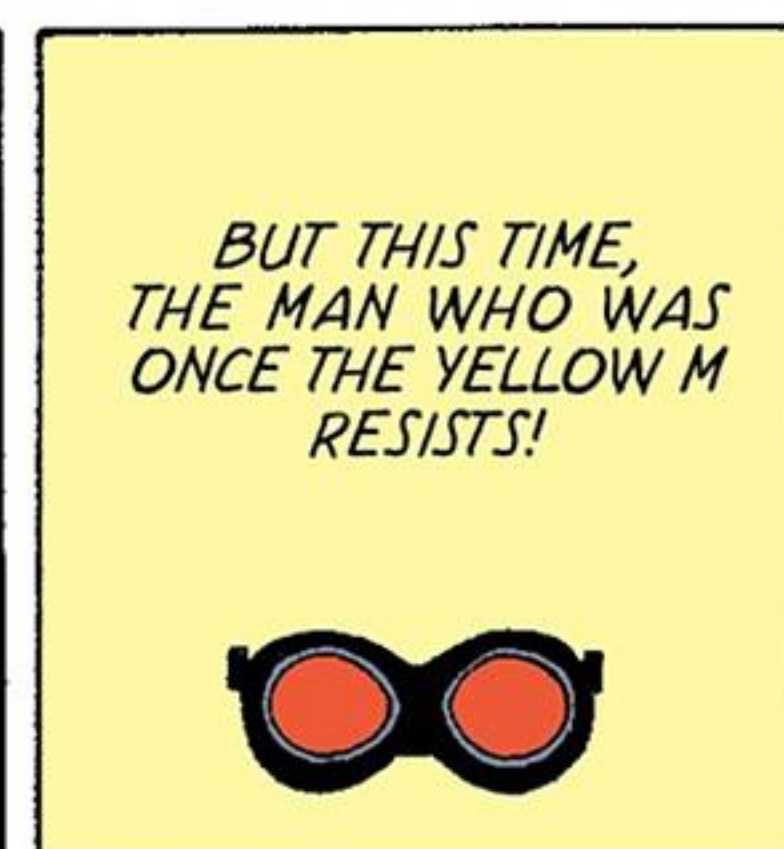
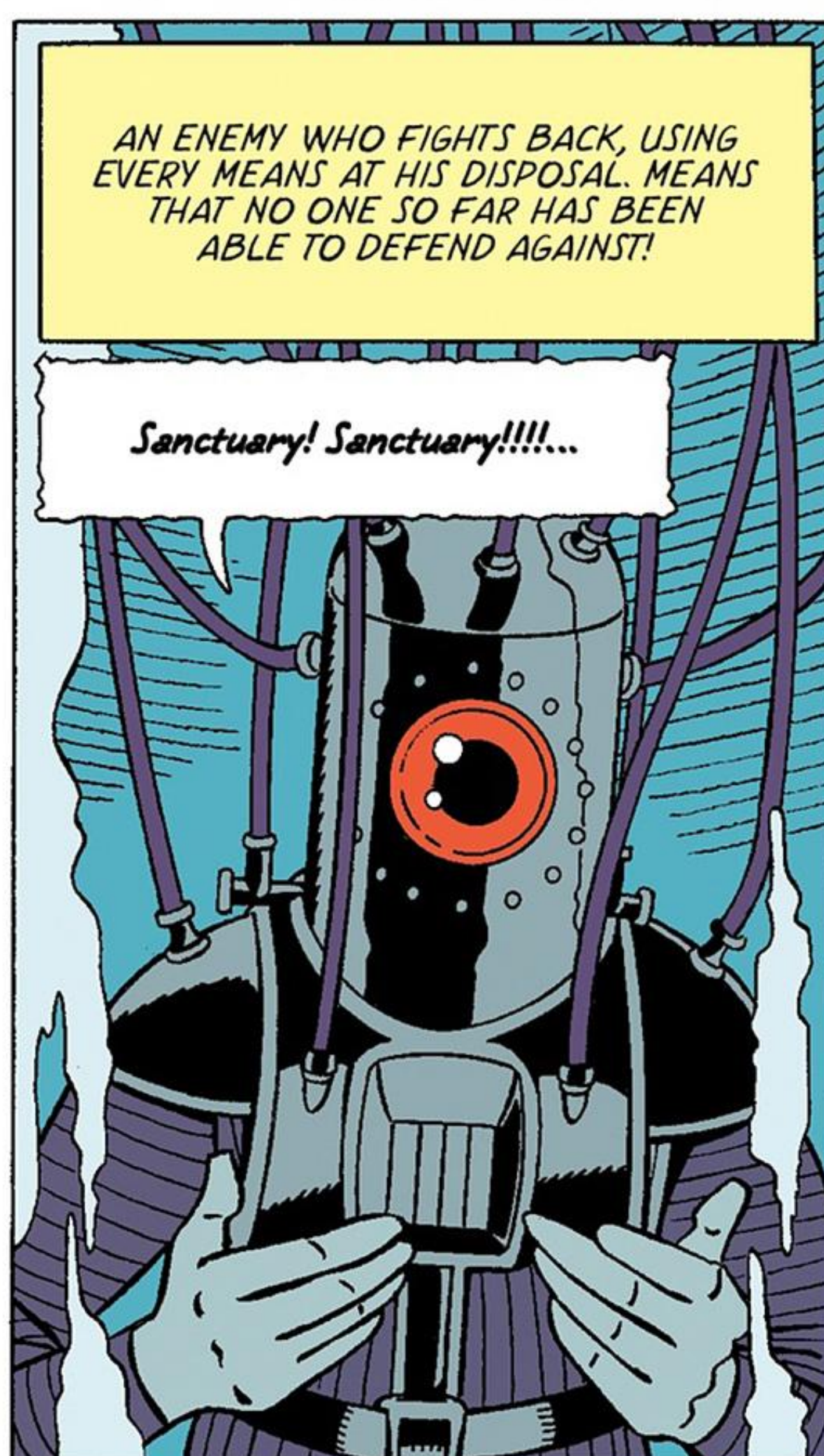
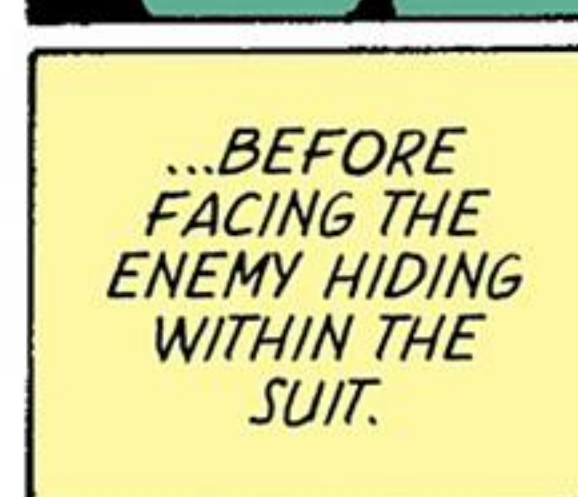
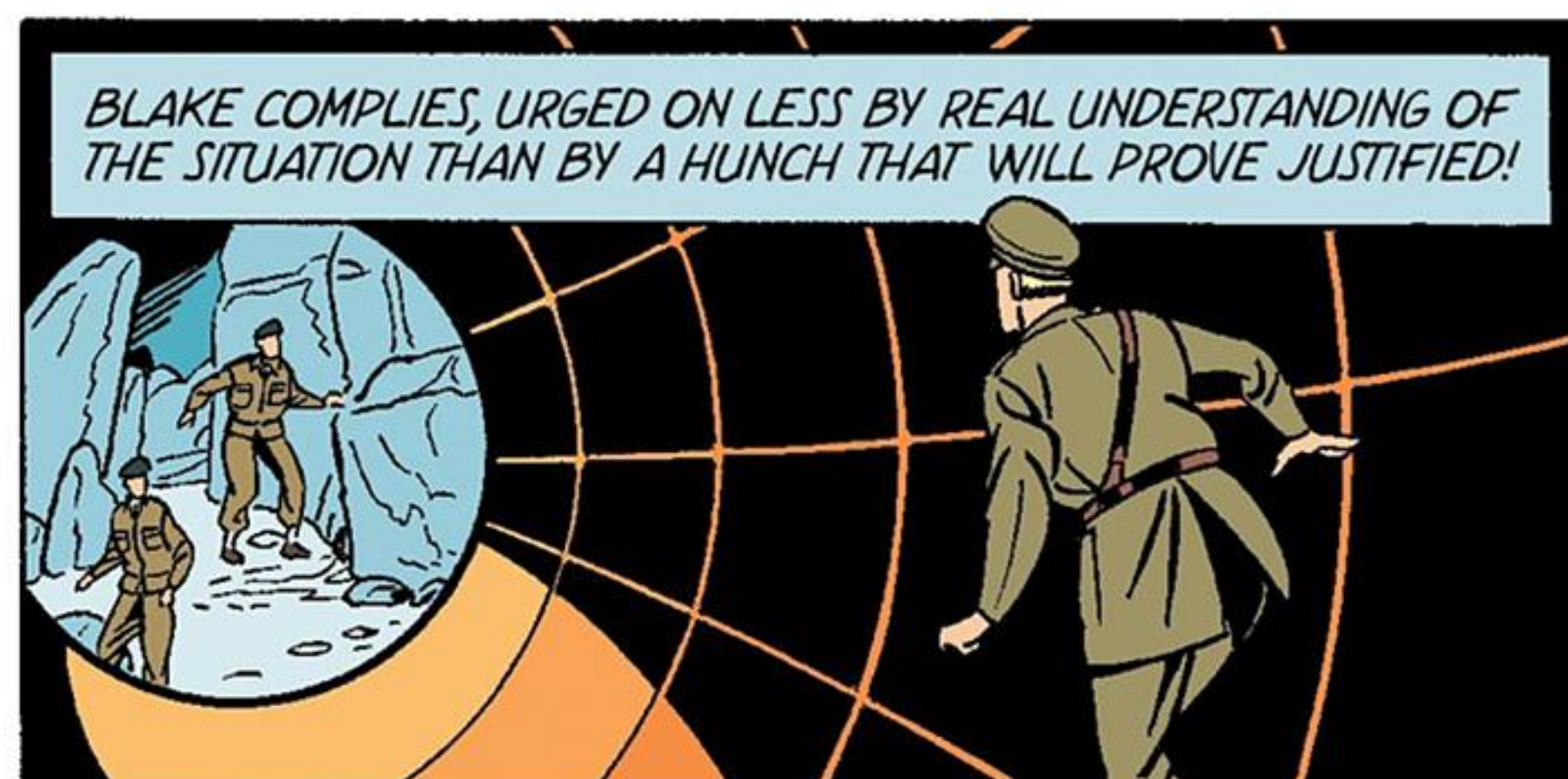
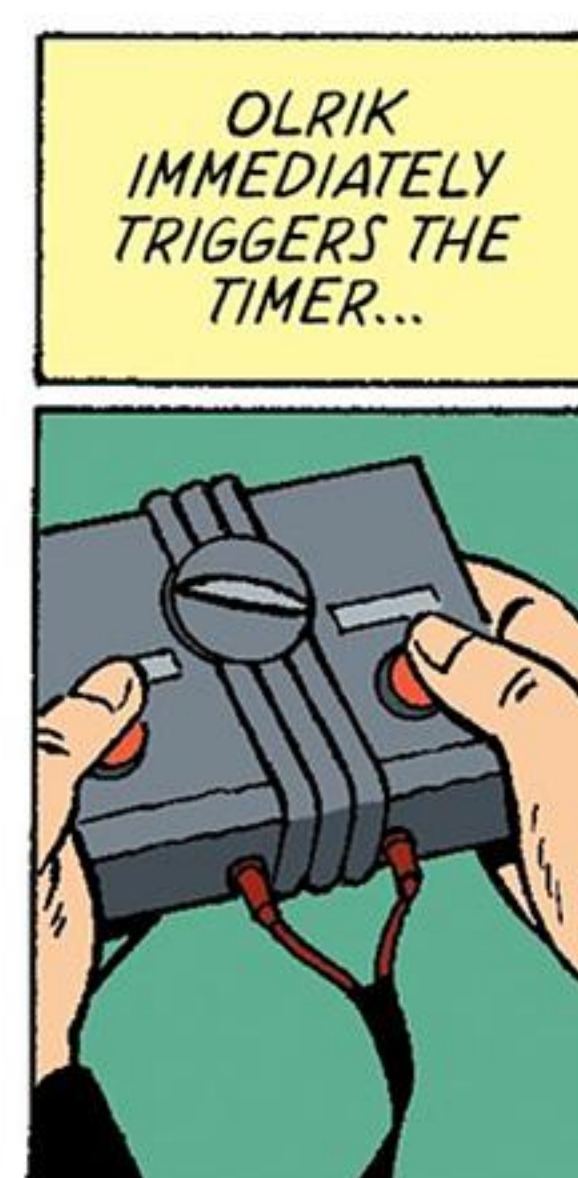
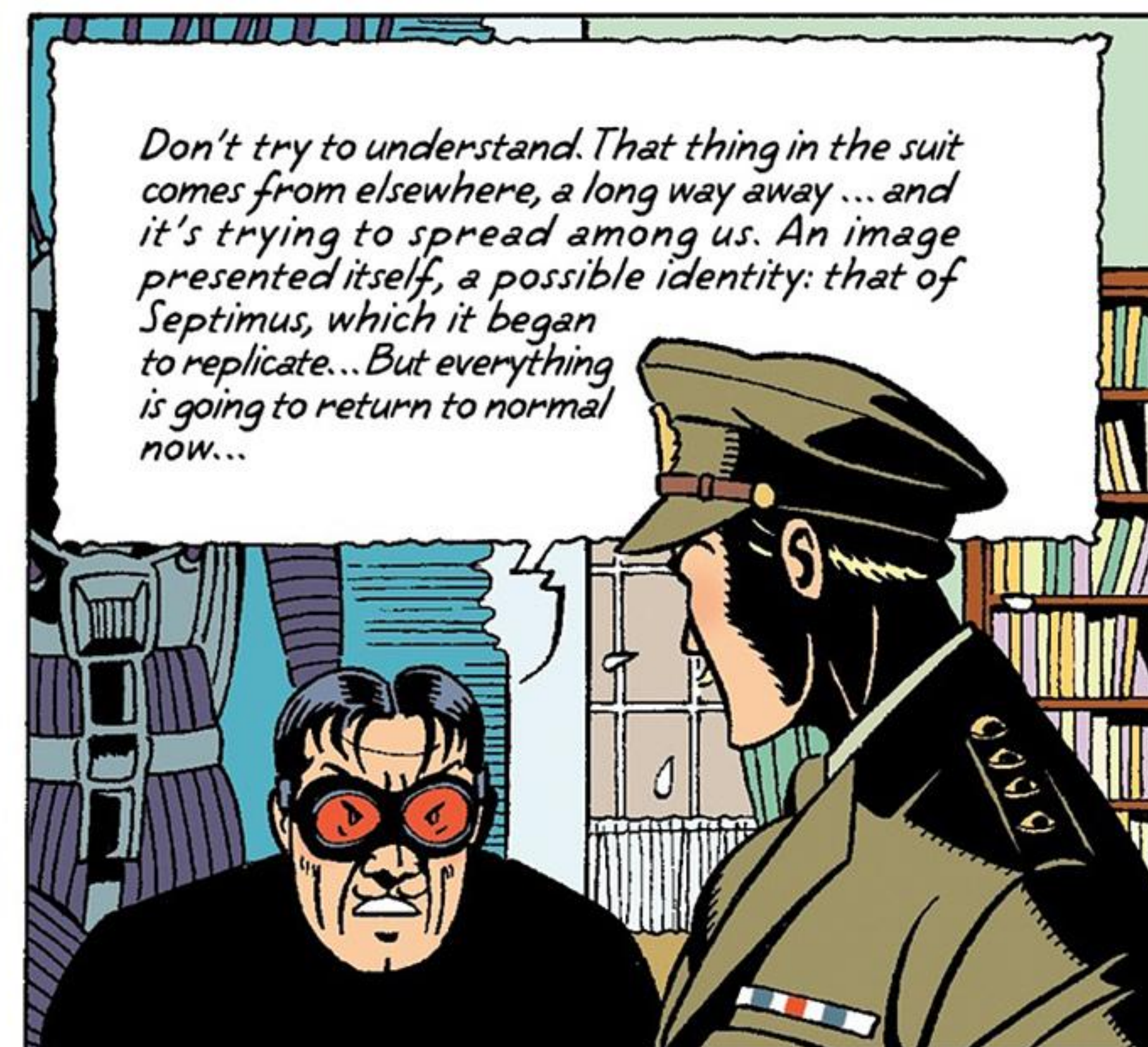
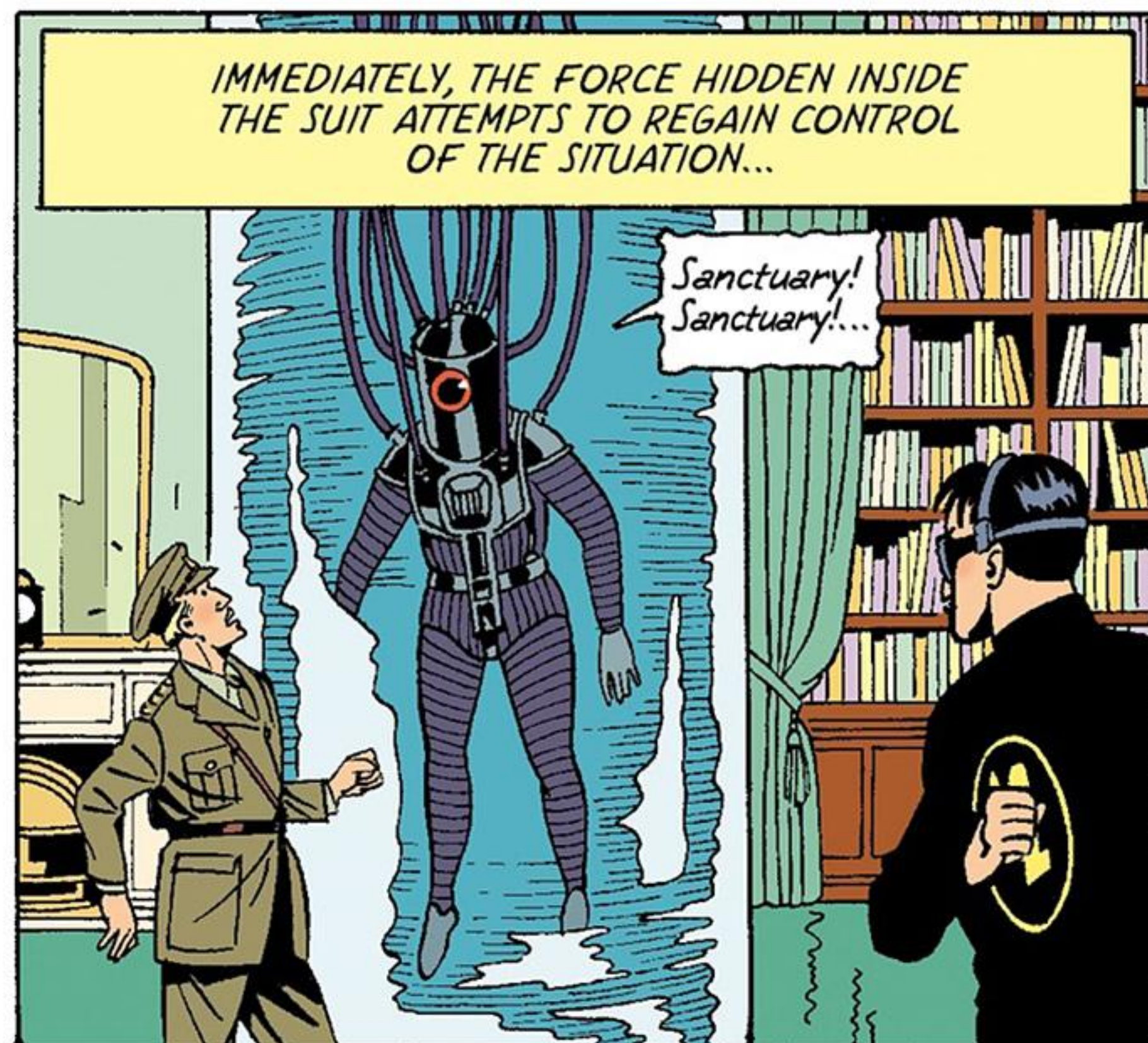
MILLOVICH WORKS QUICKLY, AND SO, FOR THE SECOND TIME, BLAKE ENTERS THE SPHERE. BUT IF ORPHEUS DOESN'T SEEM TO DEFEND ITS MAIN ENTRANCE...



...ONCE INSIDE, THE STAKES ARE RAISED DRAMATICALLY. THE SETTING HAS ONCE AGAIN MUTATED AROUND THE CENTRAL COLUMN. BLAKE RECOGNISES IT IMMEDIATELY: PROFESSOR SEPTIMUS'S LAIR IN TAVISTOCK SQUARE.







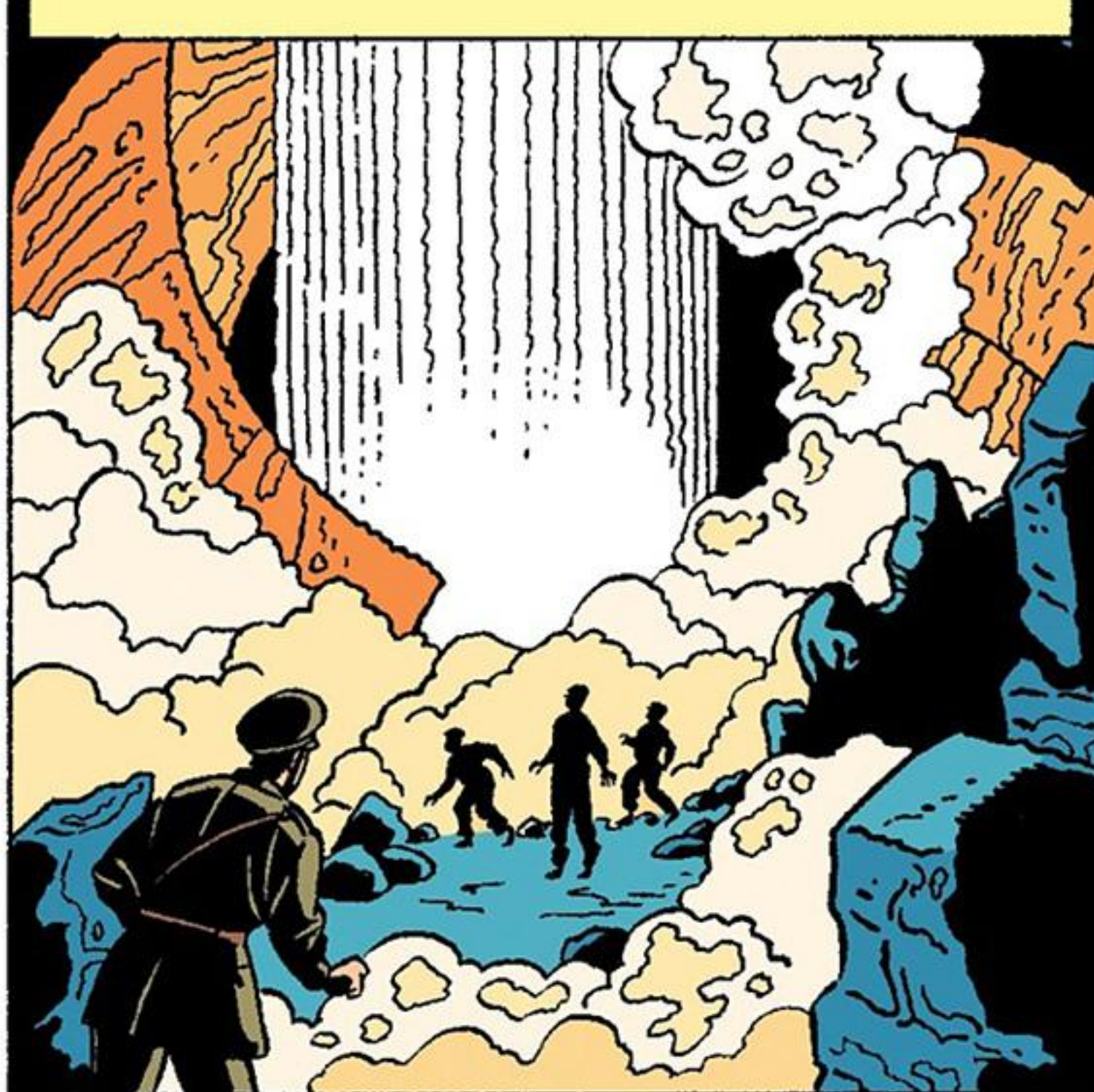
LOOKING UP, BLAKE AND HIS MEN ARE FORCED TO CONTEMPLATE THE POSSIBLE COLLAPSE OF THE CEILING.



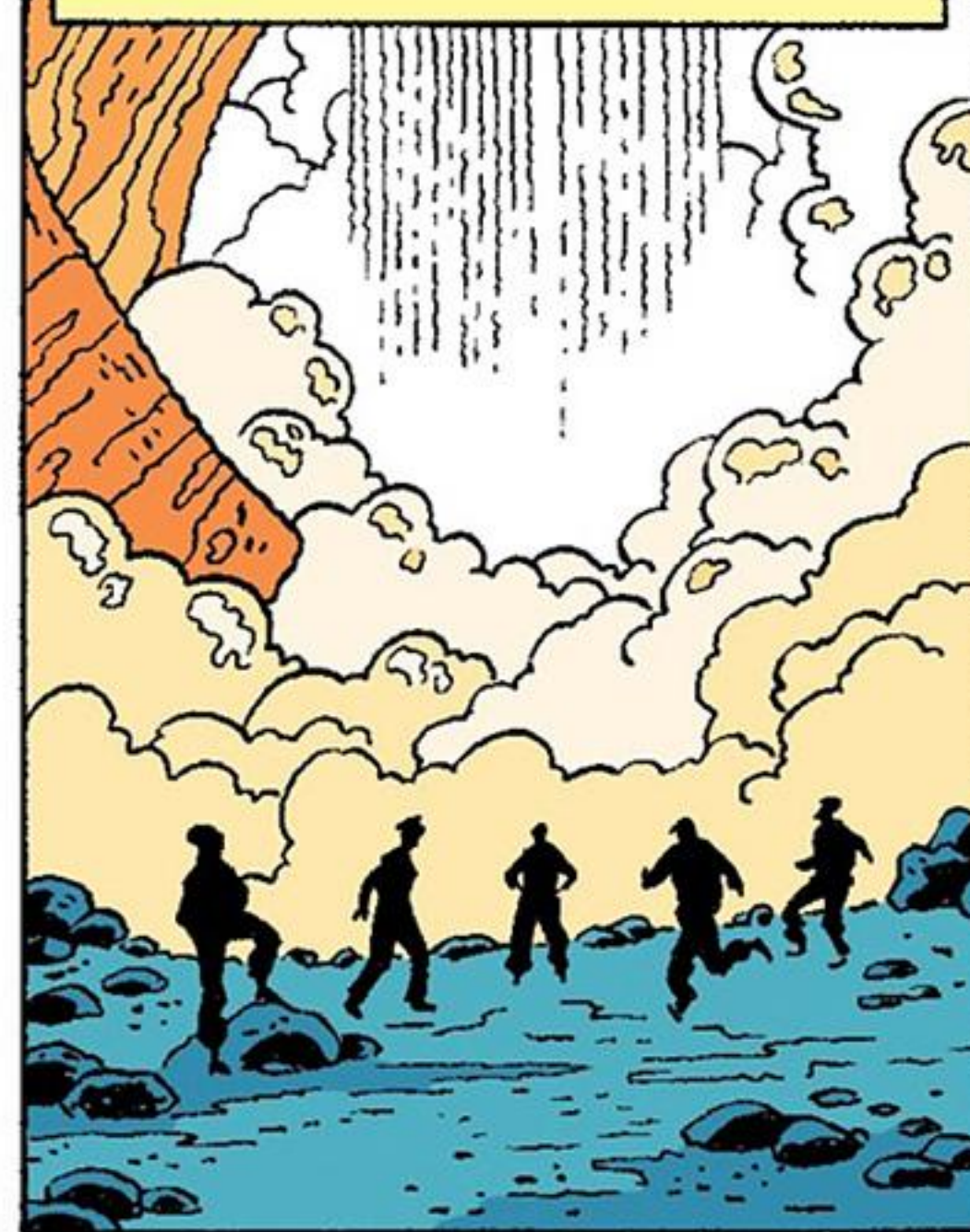
BUT WHILE A FEW CRACKS APPEAR, THE MASS OF ROCK EVENTUALLY HOLDS TOGETHER...



...UNLIKE THE SHIP. A WHOLE SECTION OF THE HULL HAS COLLAPSED, REVEALING A PILLAR OF LIGHT WHERE THE COCKPIT WAS.



SUDDENLY THE COLUMN VANISHES, SIGNALLING THE COMPLETE EXTINCTION OF ORPHEUS.



I... I think we did it, sir.



So it seems... Even though our success won't be to everyone's taste. I fear Professor Scaramian is unlikely to share our satisfaction.



Not that I care! All that mattered to me was to finally rid London of the threat that Orpheus represented...

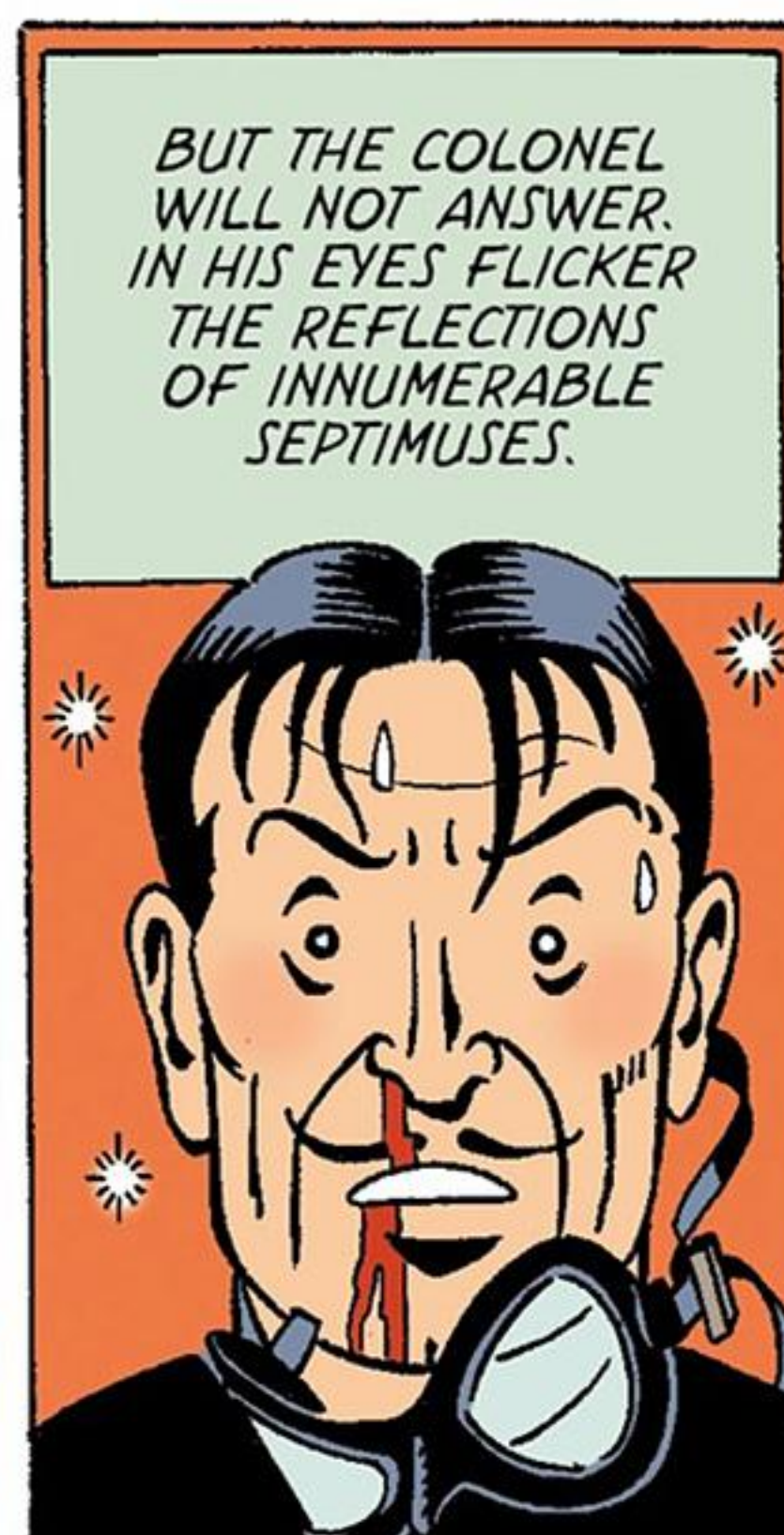
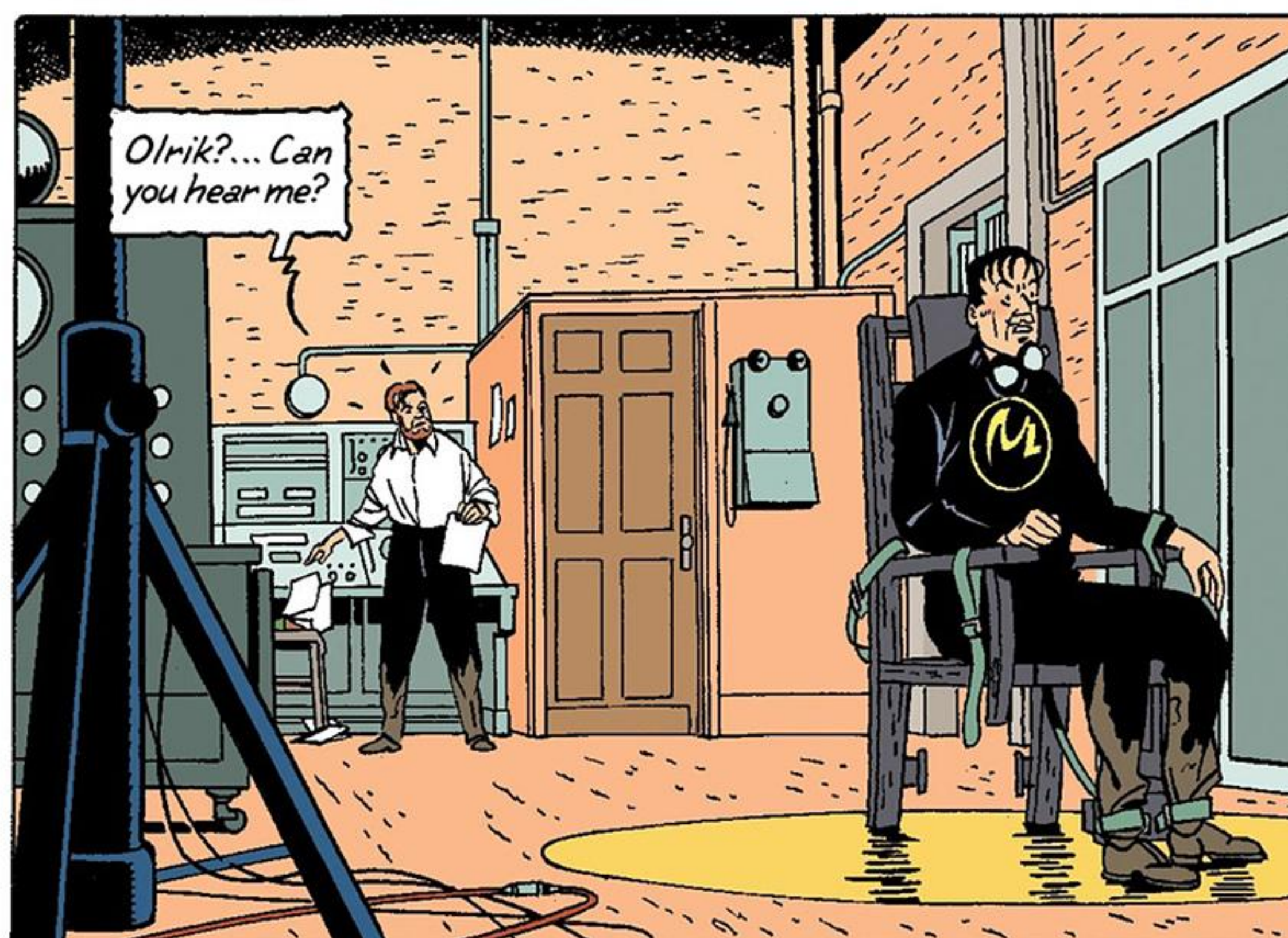
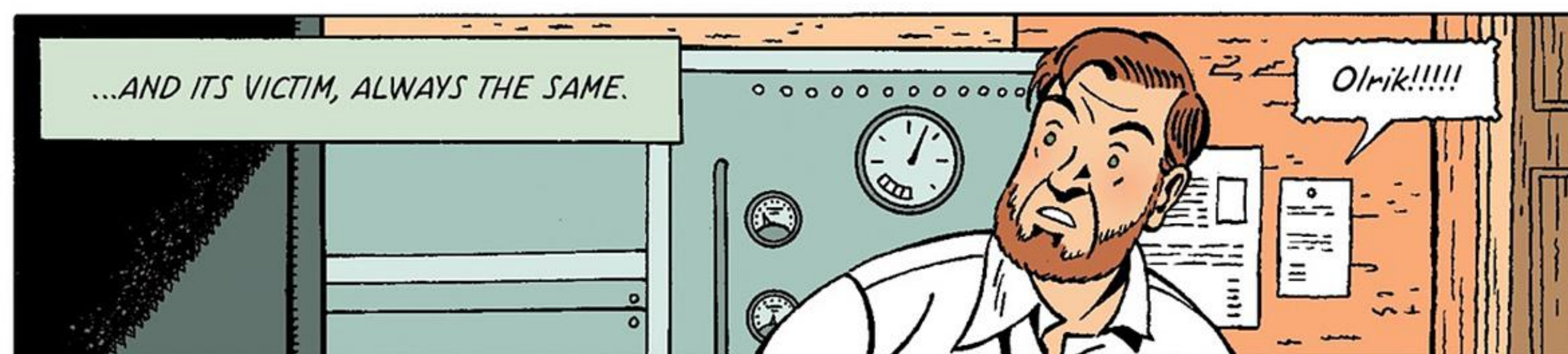
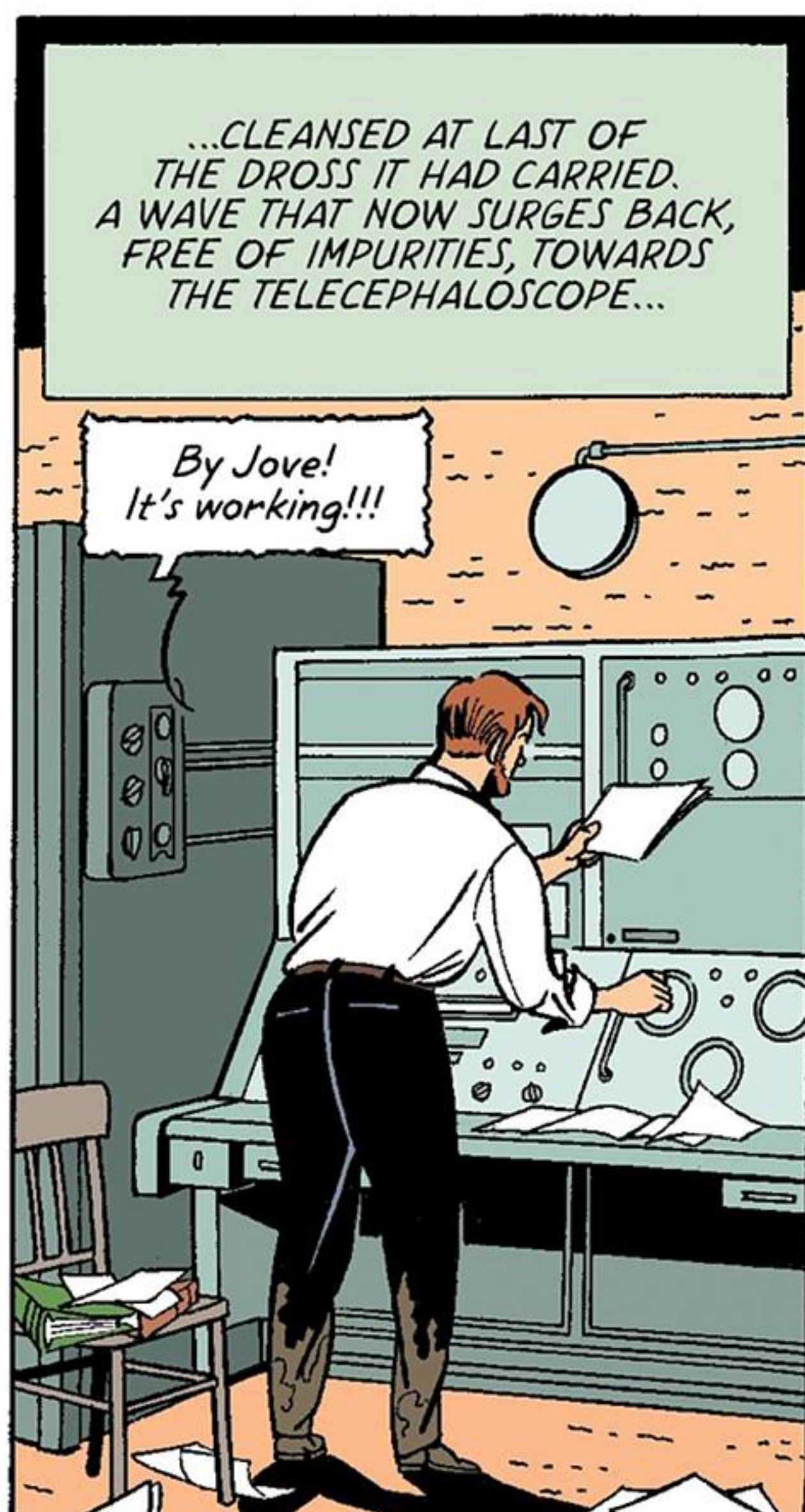


BUT OF ALL THOSE DRAMATIC EVENTS, ONE TRACE WAS TO REMAIN, ONE LAST SIGNATURE. TO THE ASTONISHMENT OF LONDONERS...

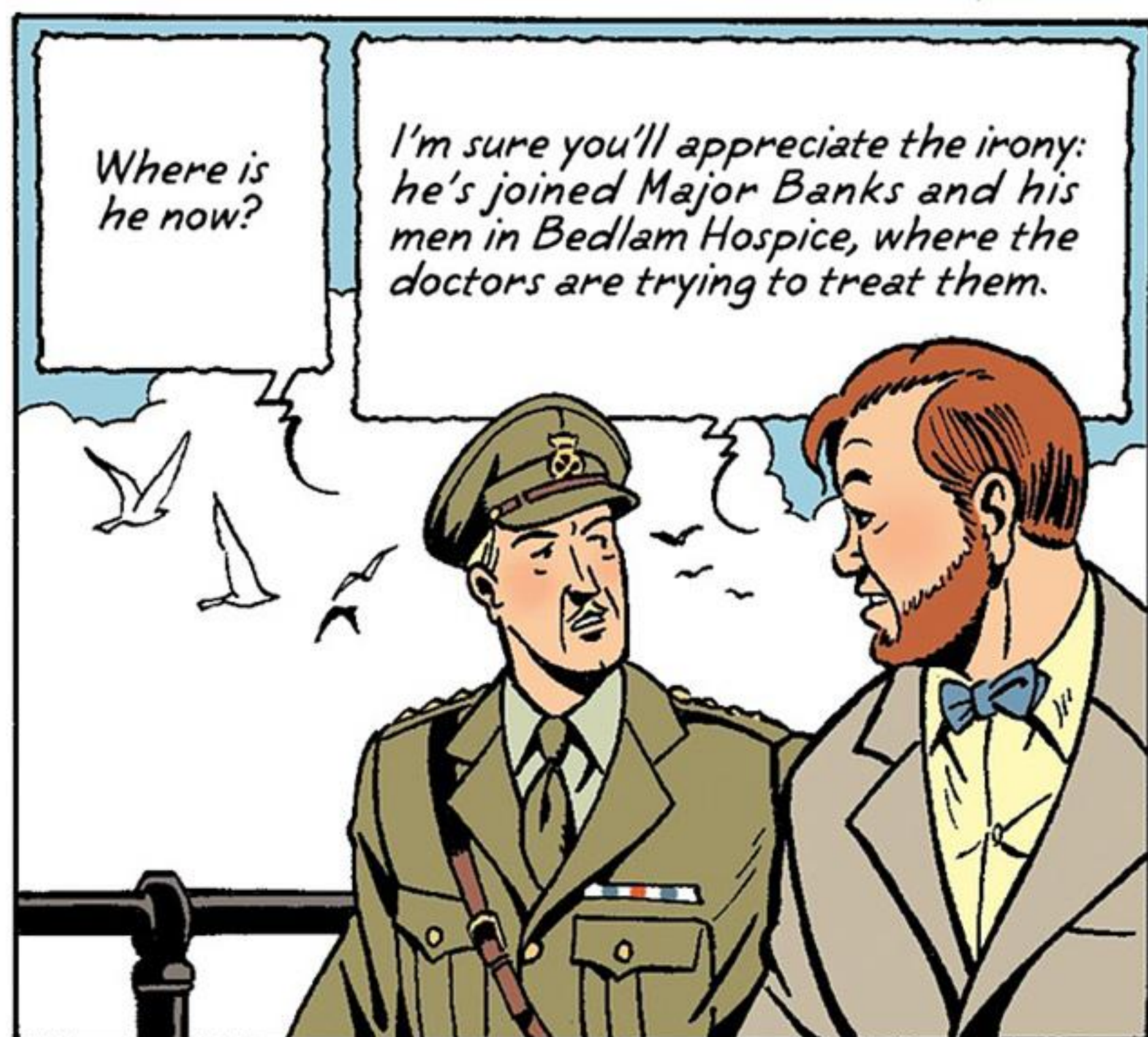


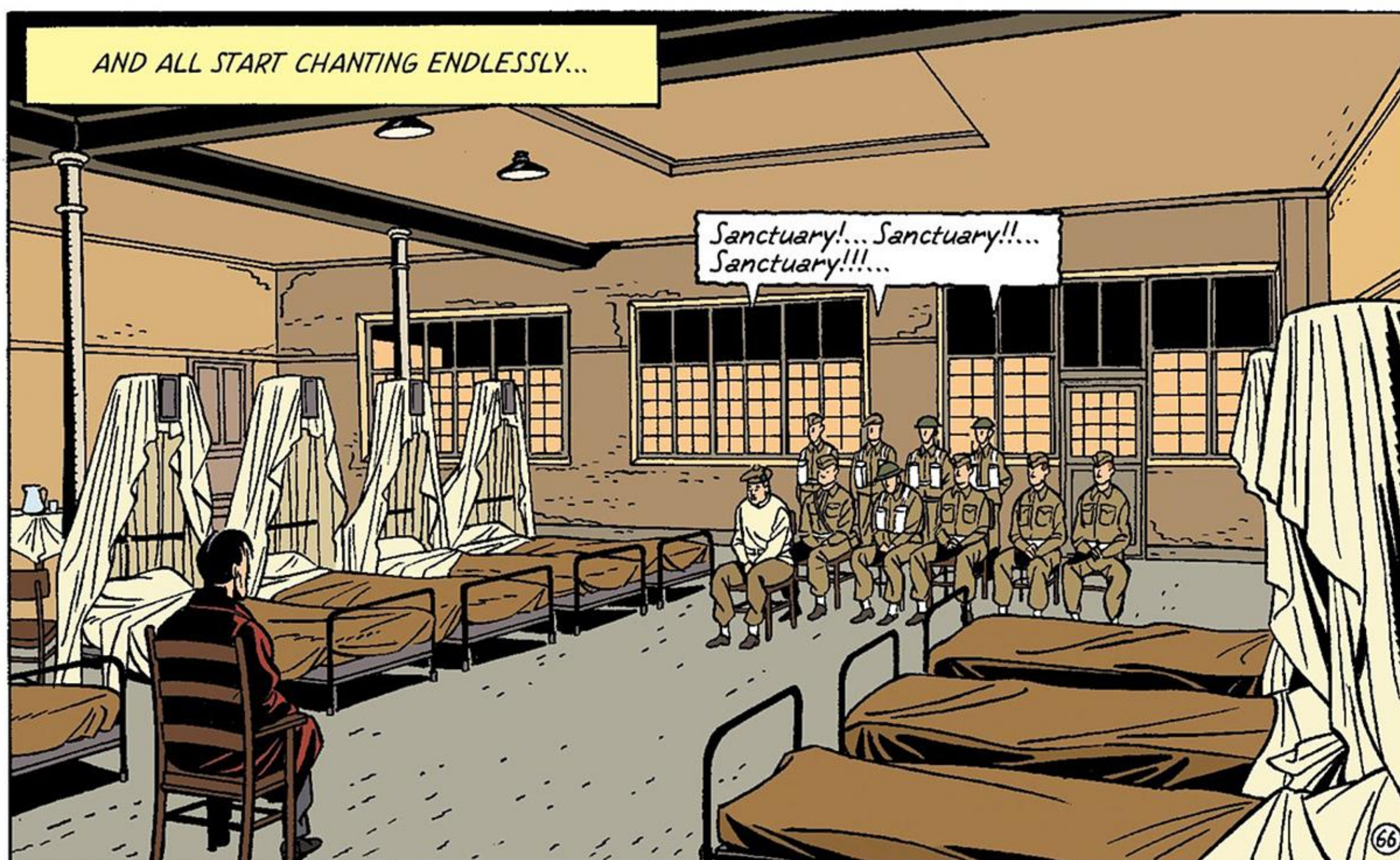
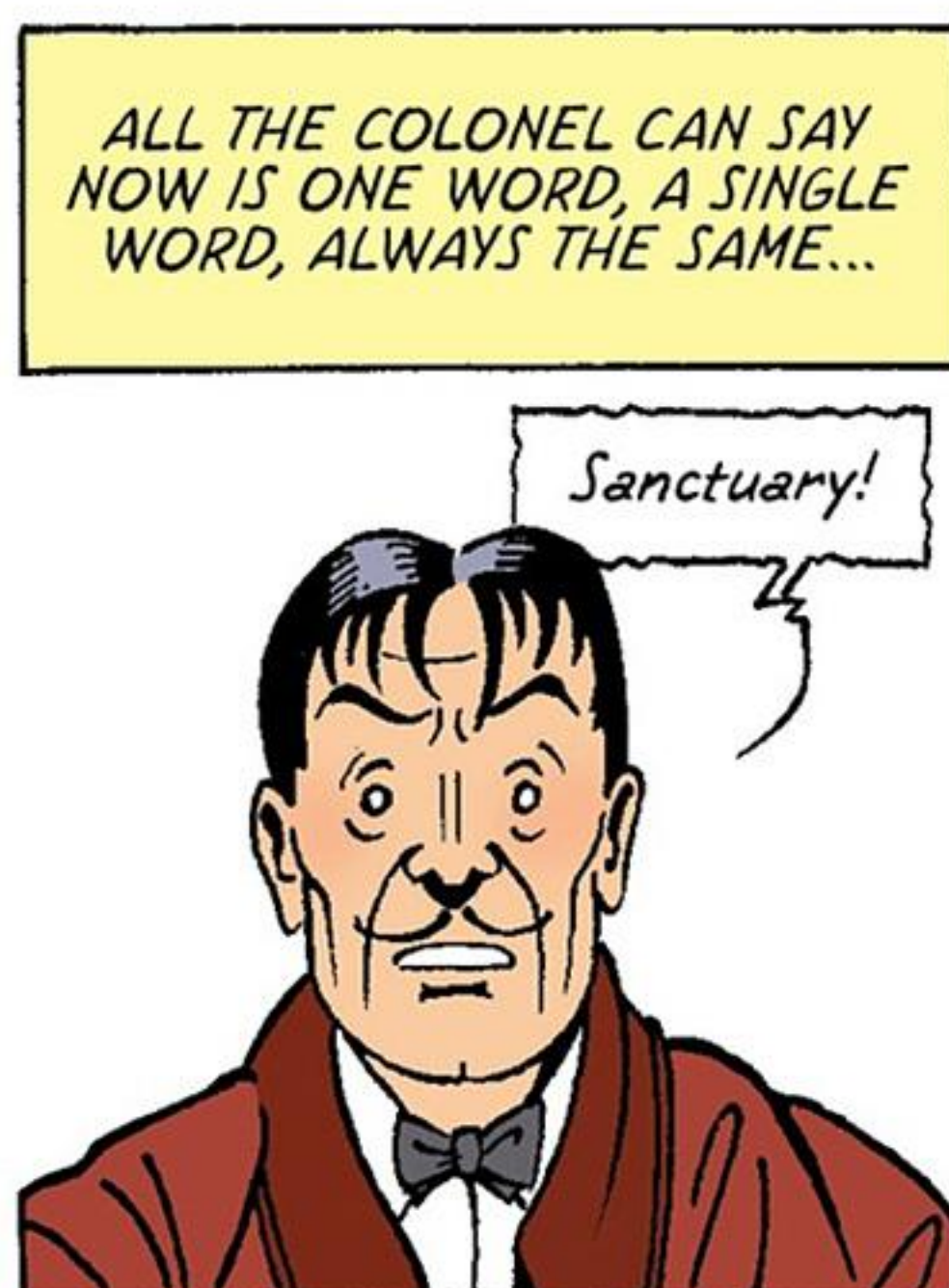
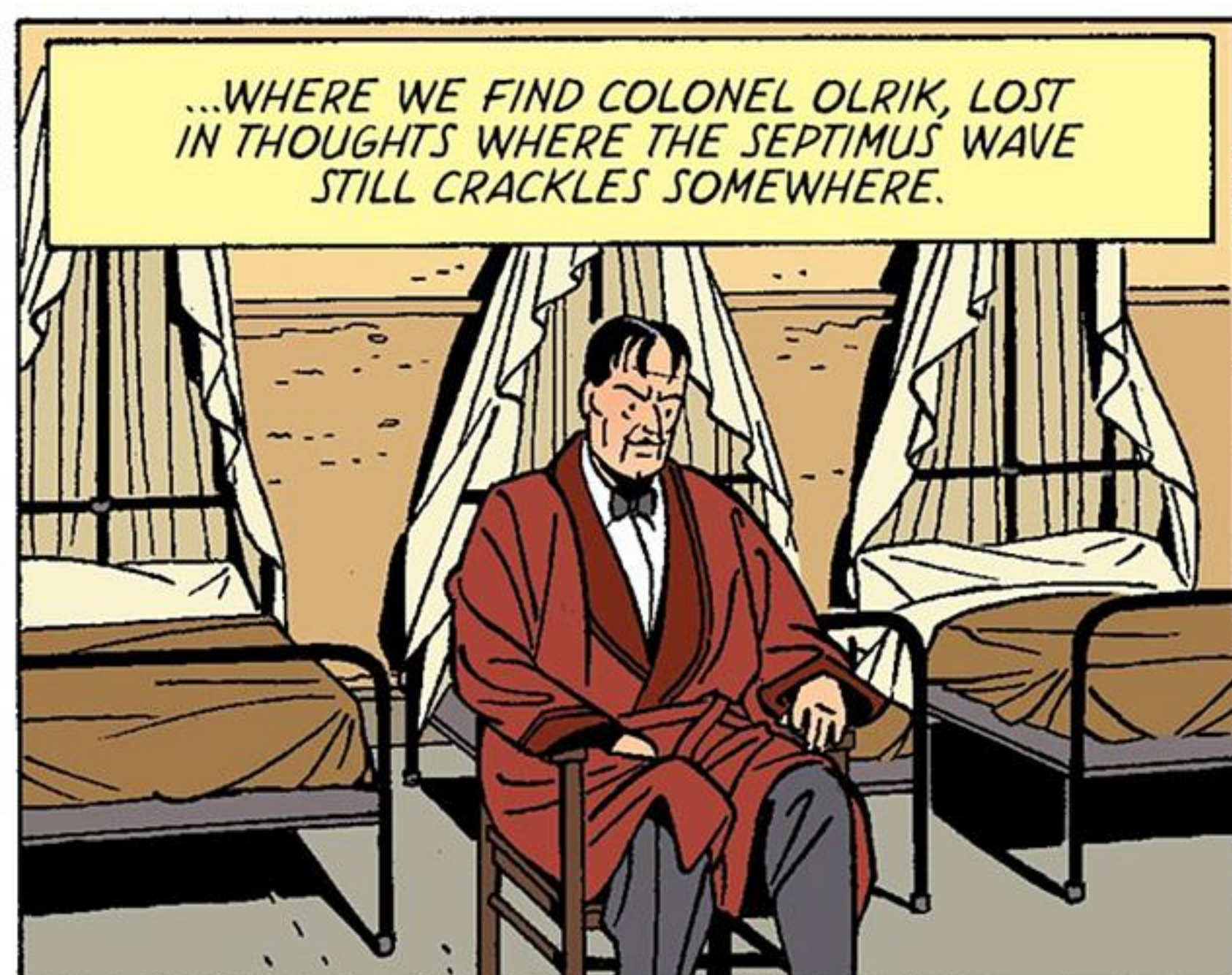
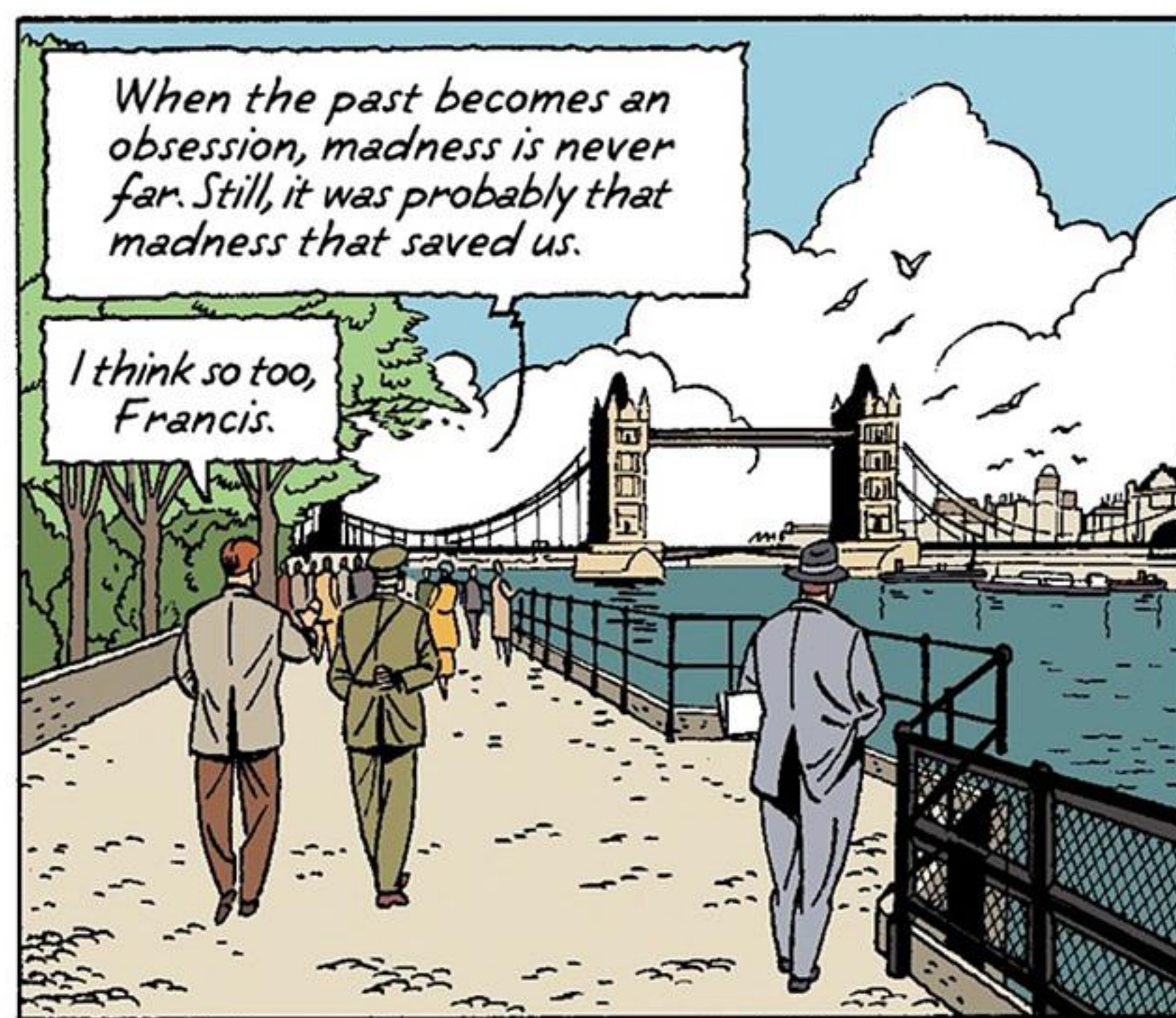
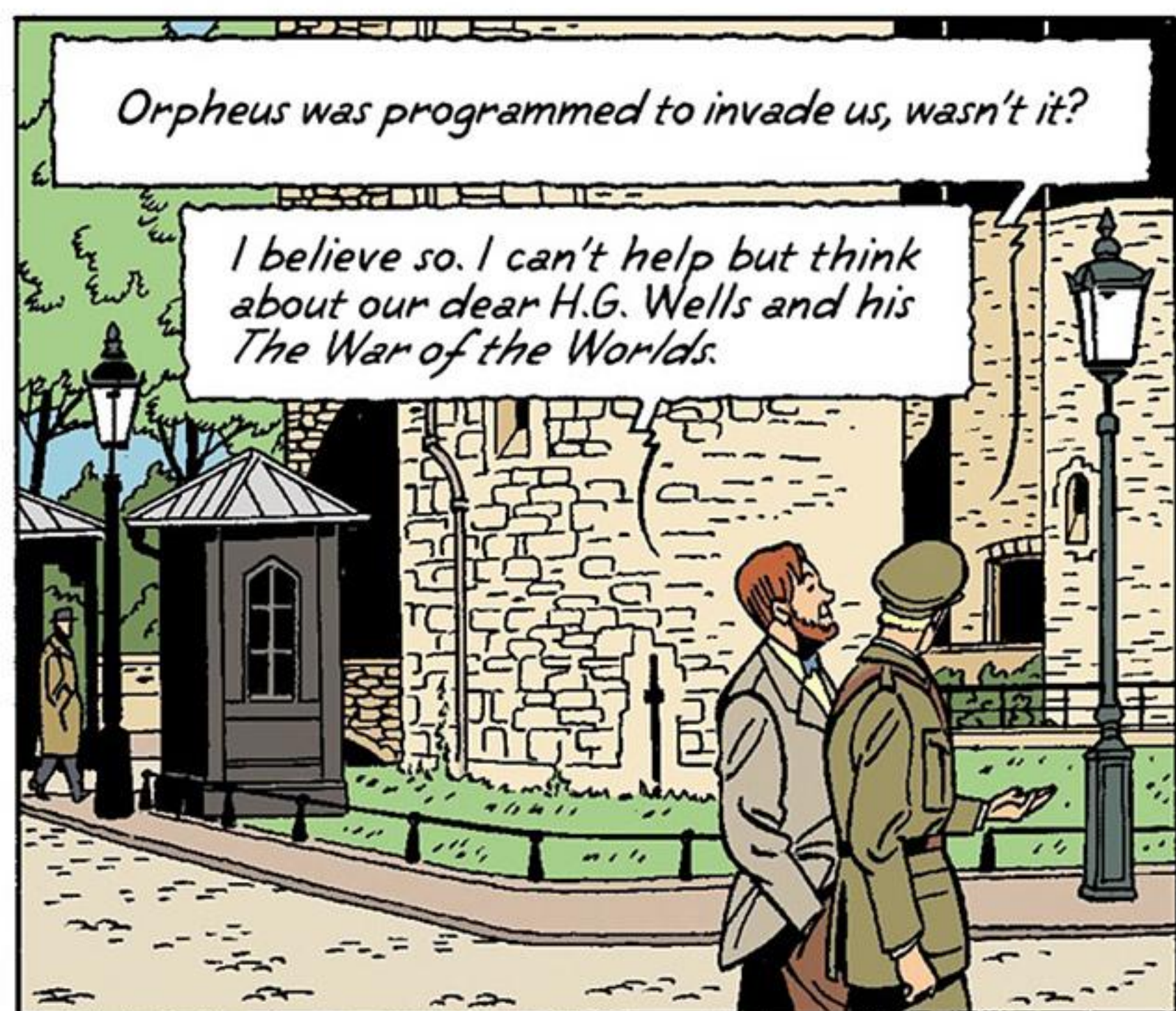
...A NEW FRIEZE NOW STRETCHED ACROSS THE WALL OF THE LONDON PAVILION, ETCHED LIKE A LAST PROJECTION OF THE MEGA WAVE...



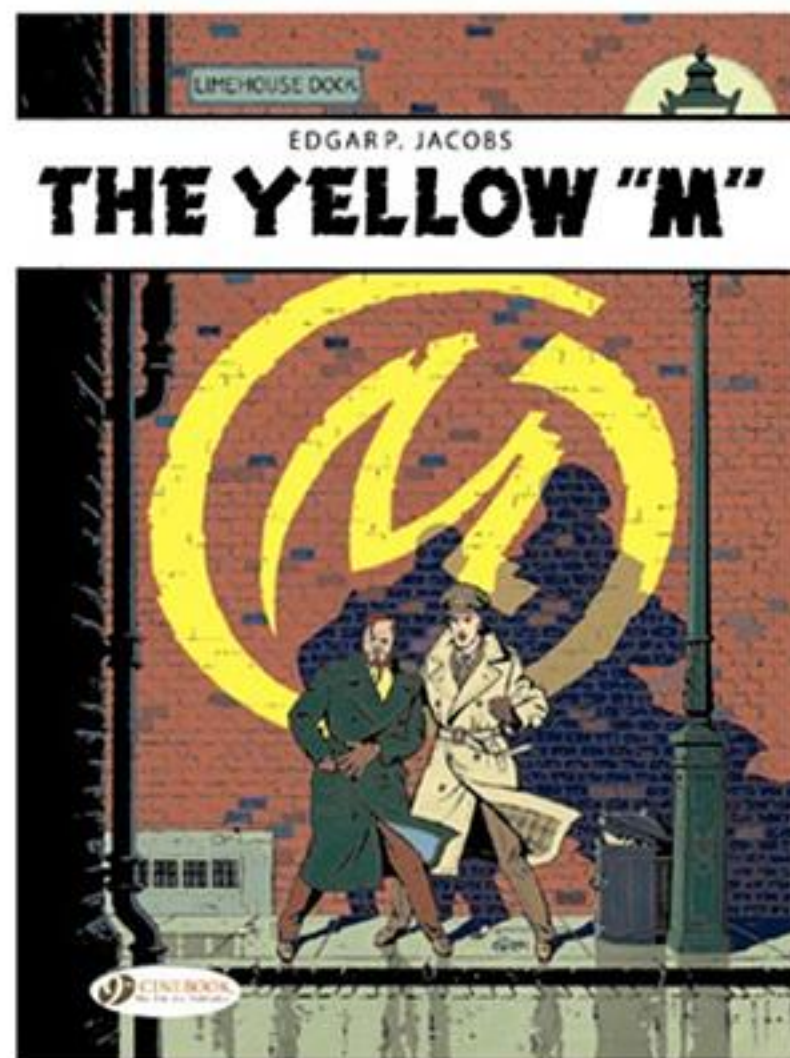


AT THE END OF THAT WEEK, OUR TWO FRIENDS MEET TO EXCHANGE A FEW LAST DETAILS ABOUT THE DRAMATIC EVENTS THEY'VE EXPERIENCED.

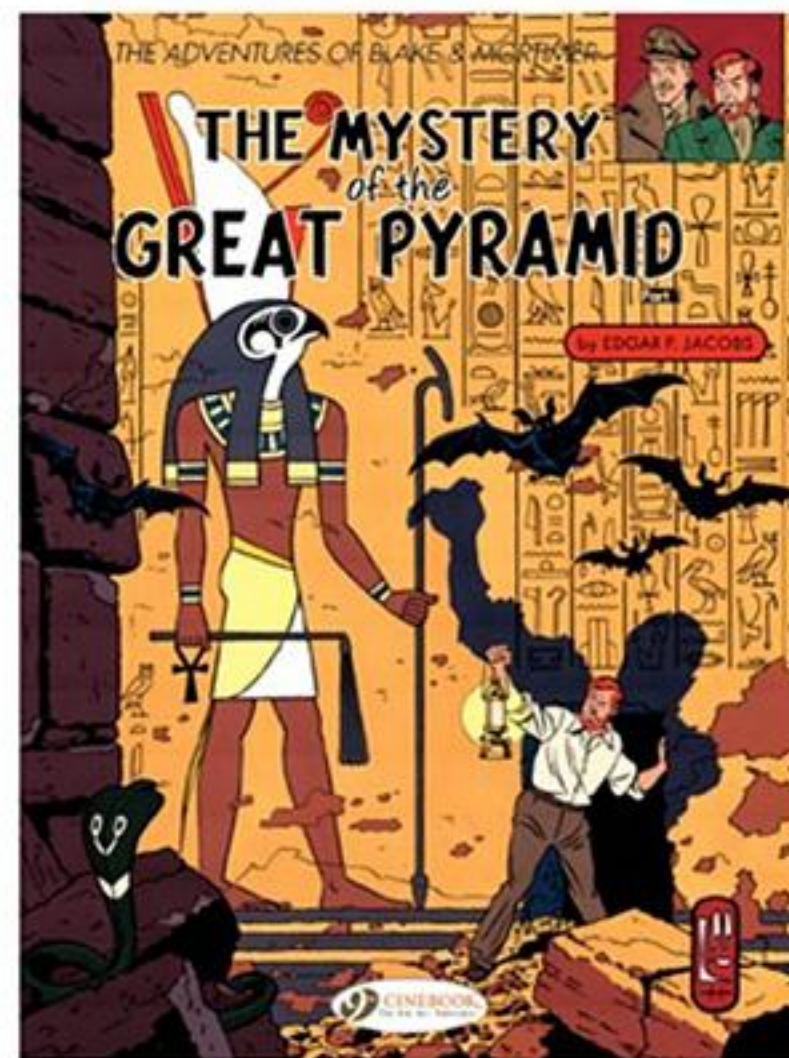




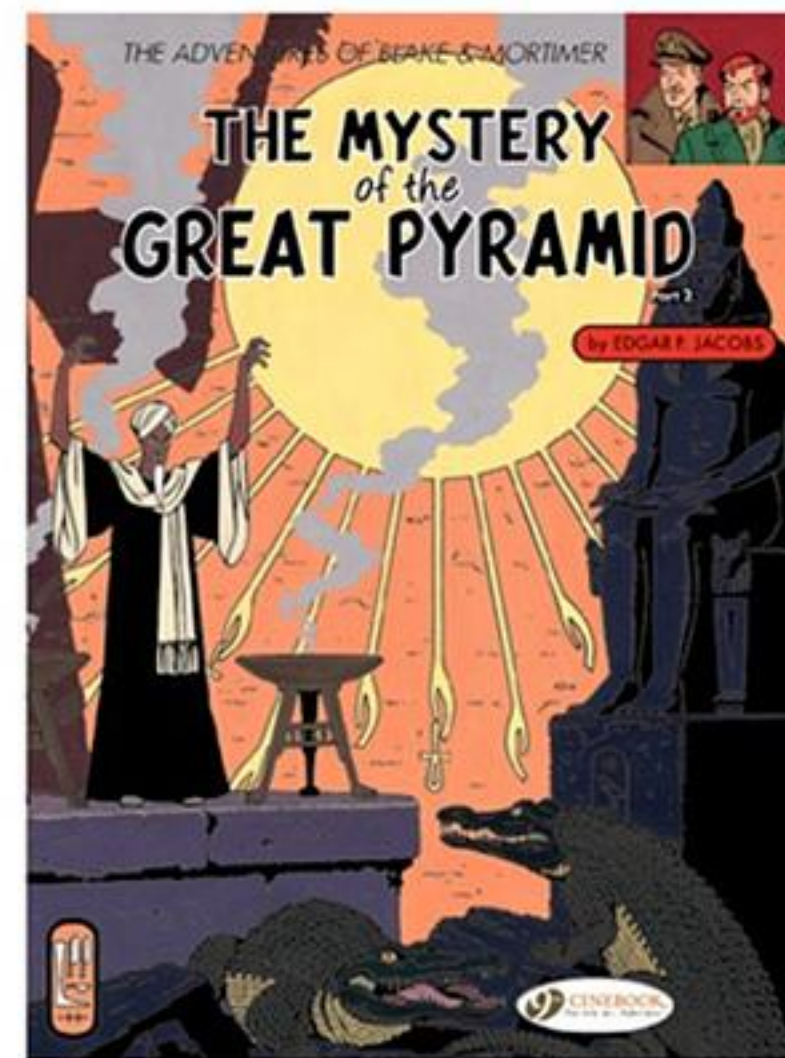
THE ADVENTURES OF BLAKE & MORTIMER



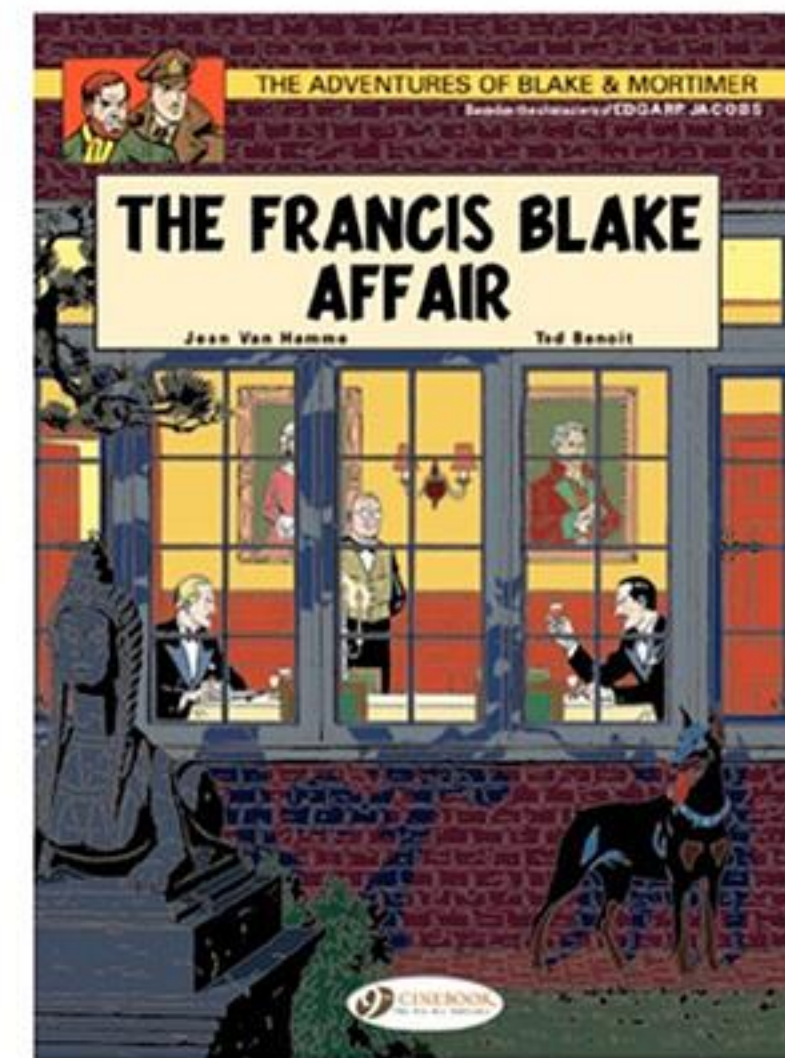
1-The Yellow "M"
EDGAR P. JACOBS



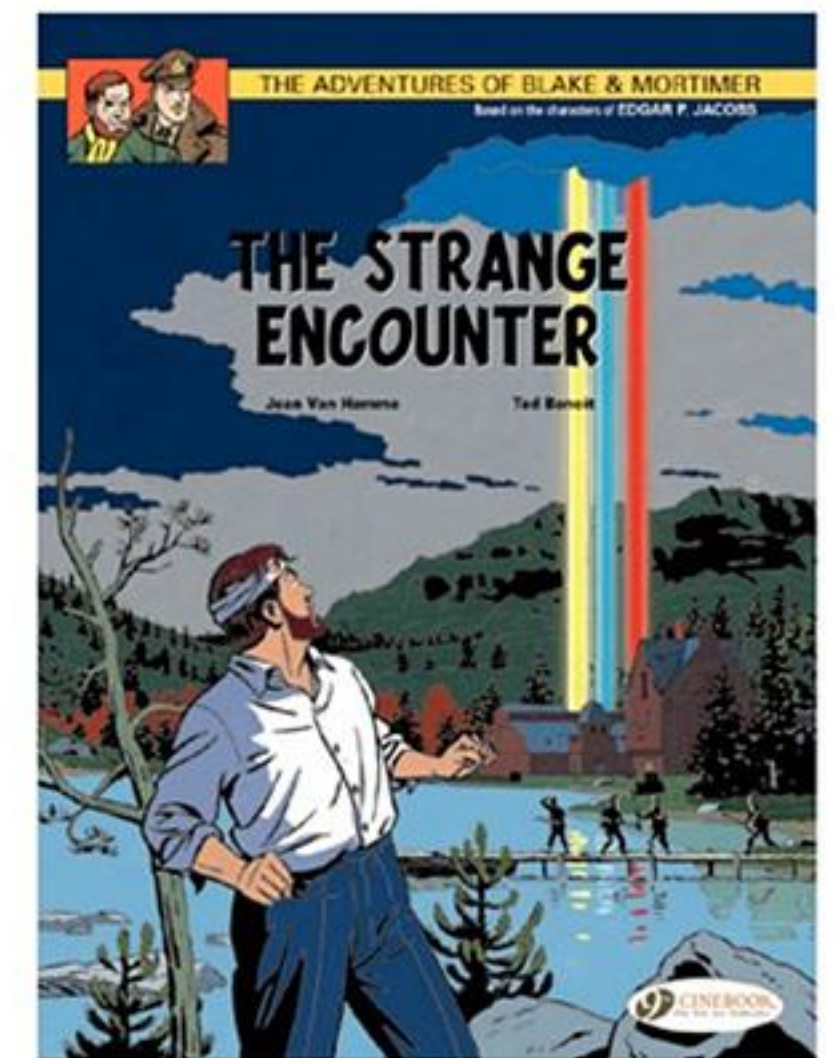
2-The Mystery of the Great Pyramid Part 1
EDGAR P. JACOBS



3-The Mystery of the Great Pyramid Part 2
EDGAR P. JACOBS



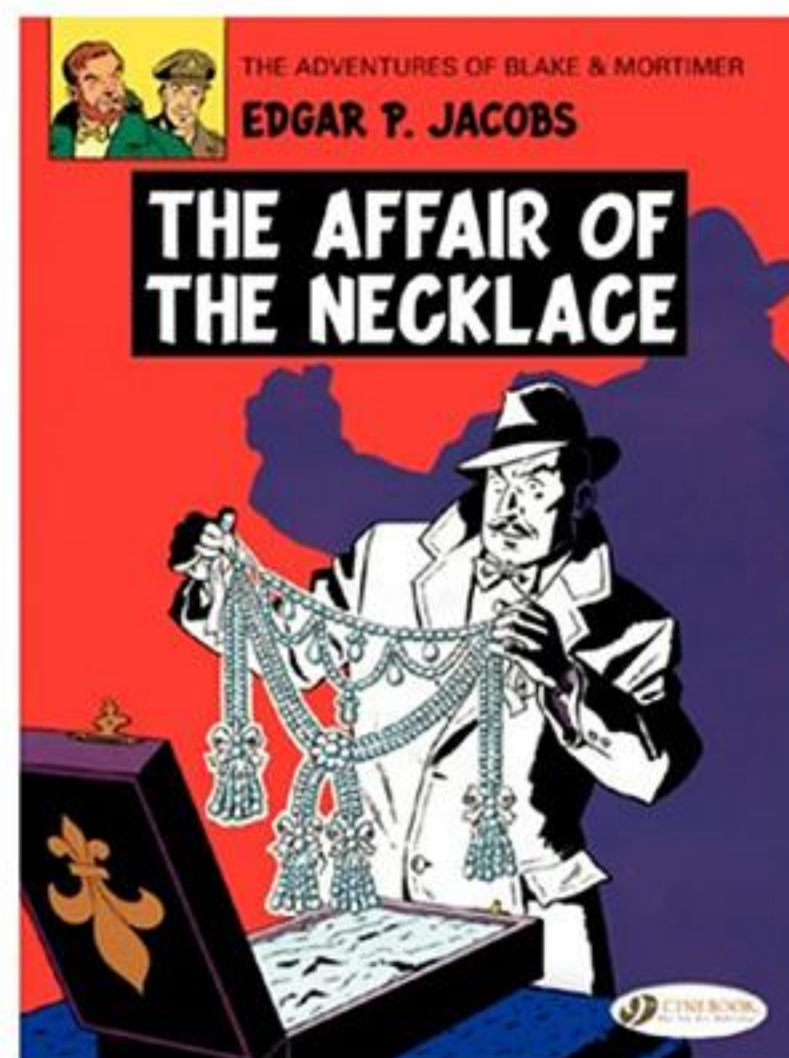
4-The Francis Blake Affair
VAN HAMME - BENOIT



5-The Strange Encounter
VAN HAMME - BENOIT



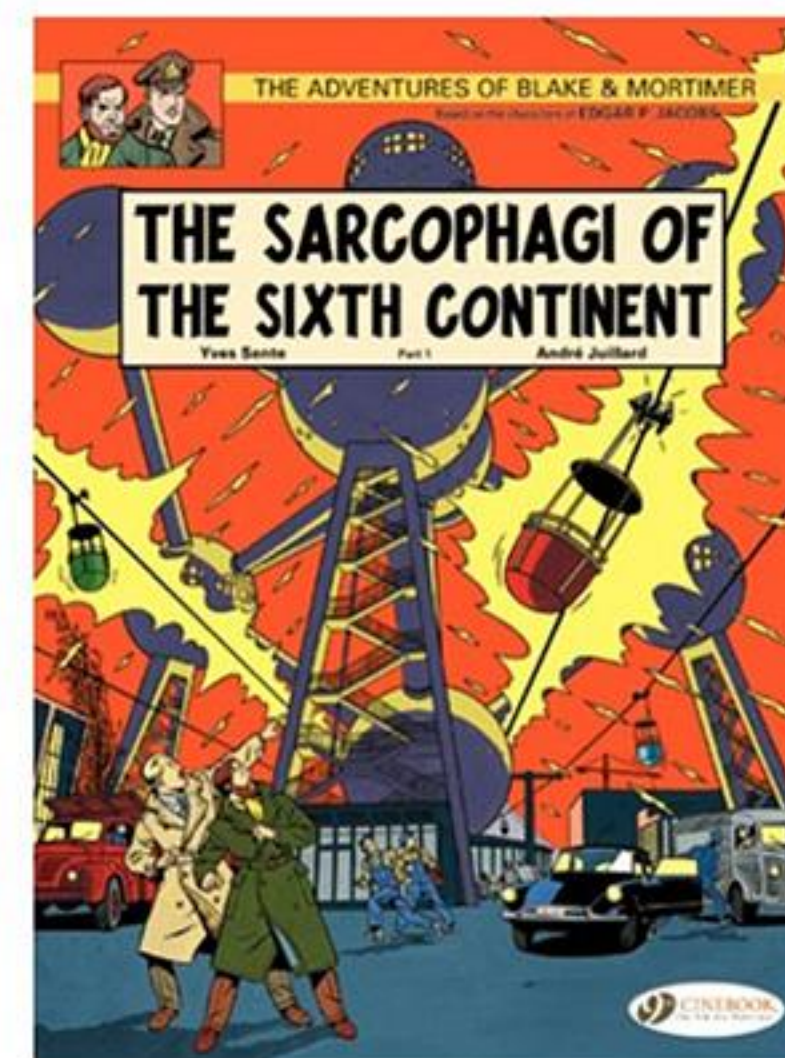
6-S.O.S. Meteors
EDGAR P. JACOBS



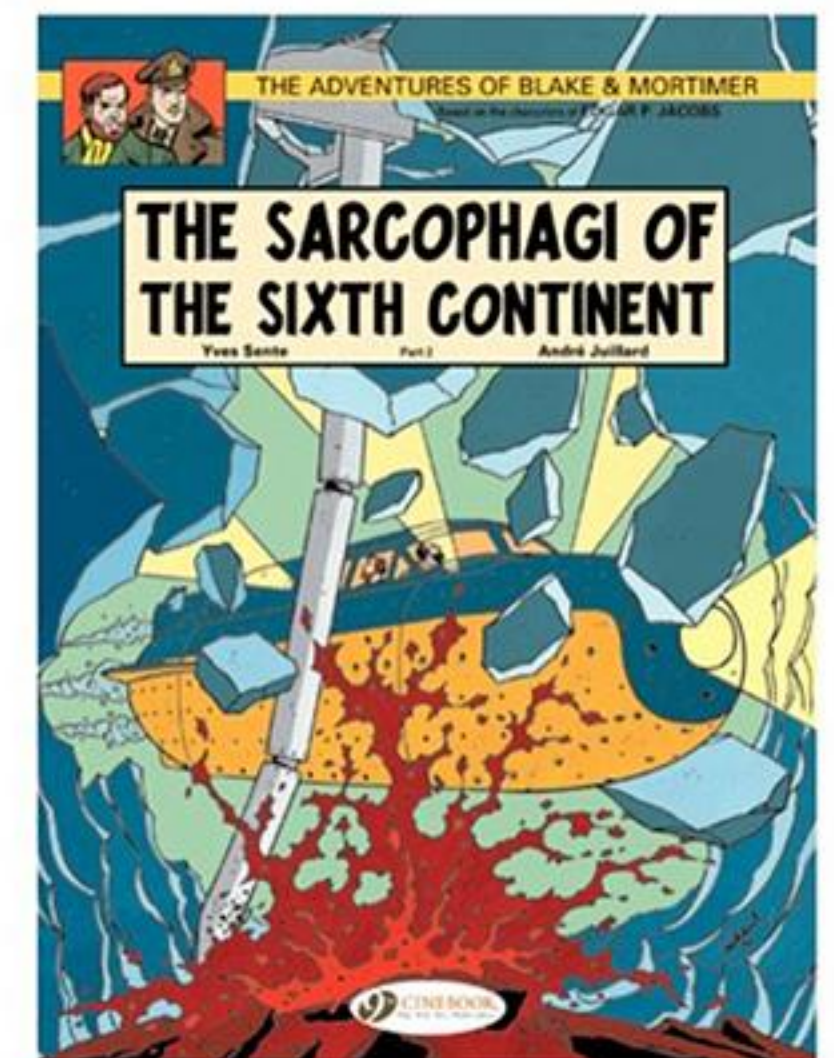
7-The Affair of the Necklace
EDGAR P. JACOBS



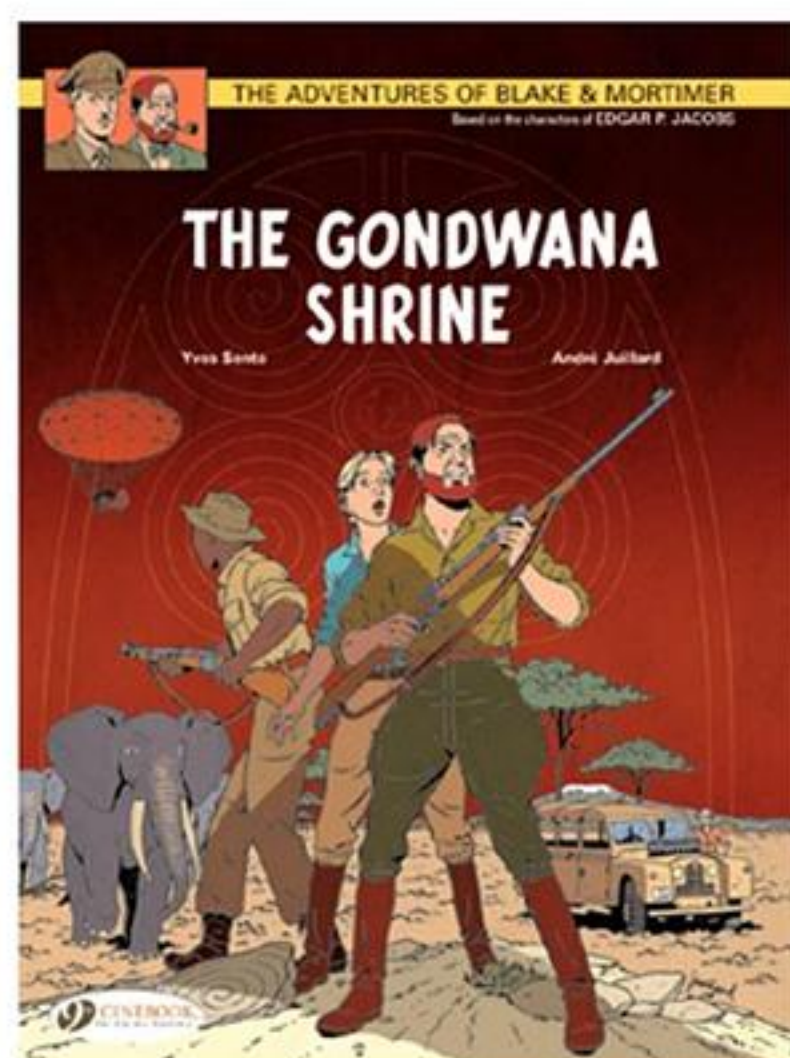
8-The Voronov Plot
SENTE - JUILLARD



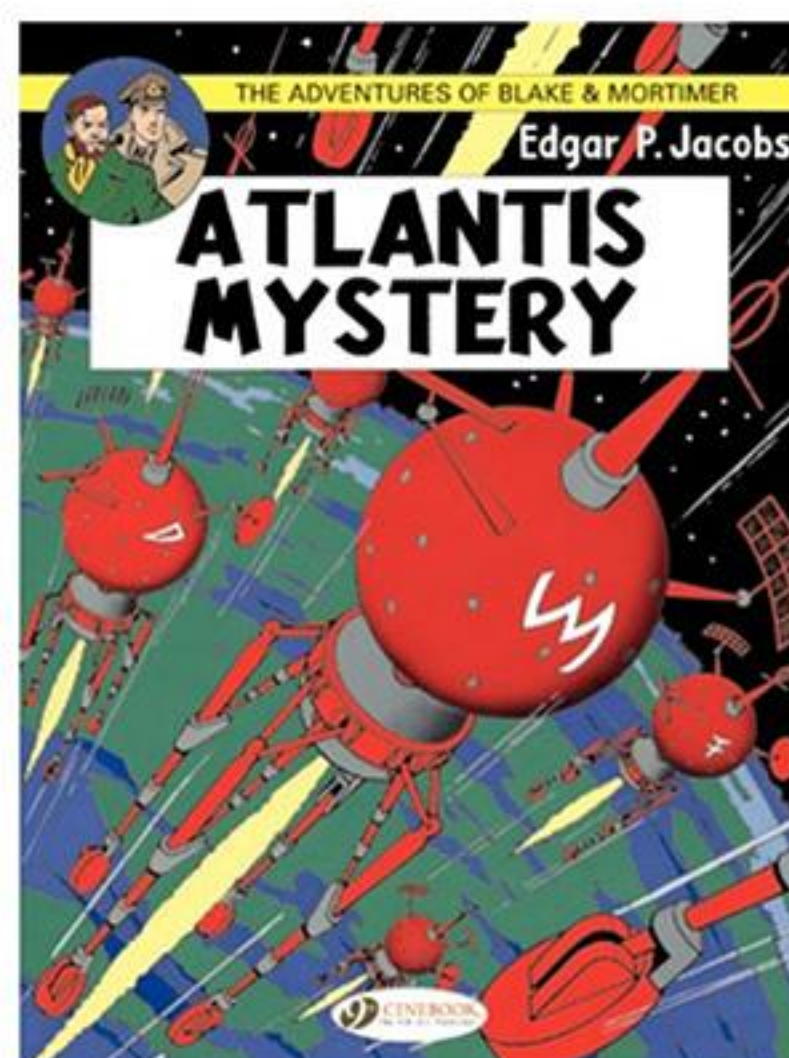
9-The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent Part 1
SENTE - JUILLARD



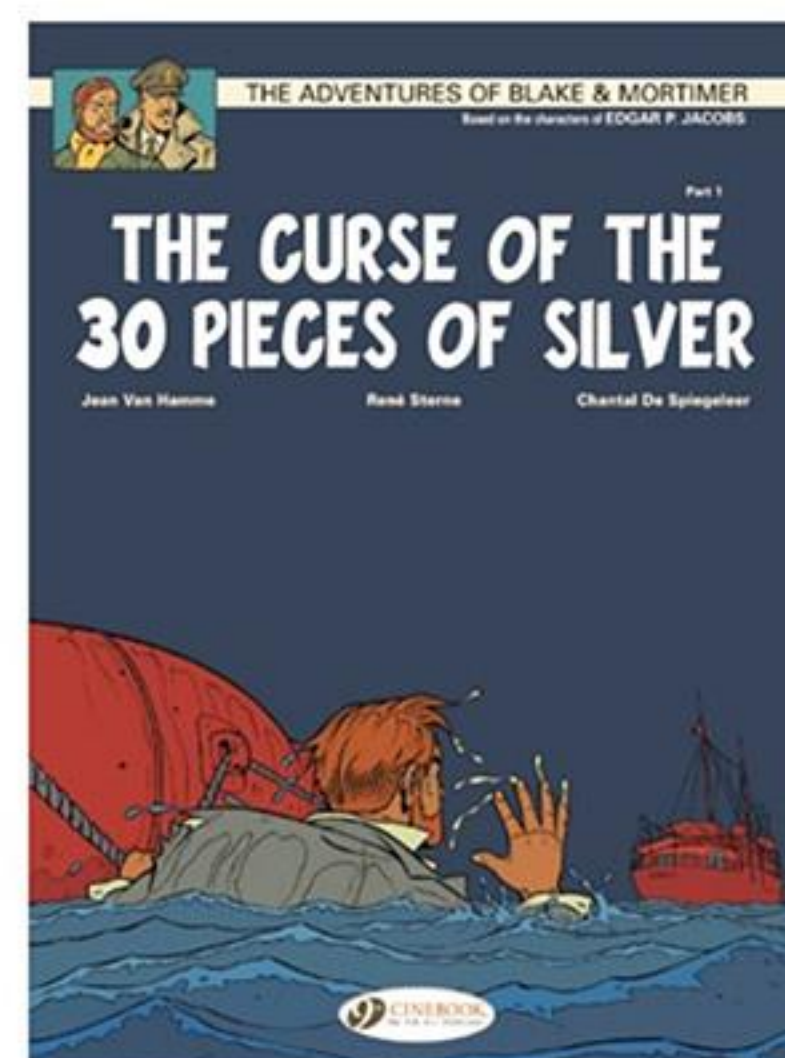
10-The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent Part 2
SENTE - JUILLARD



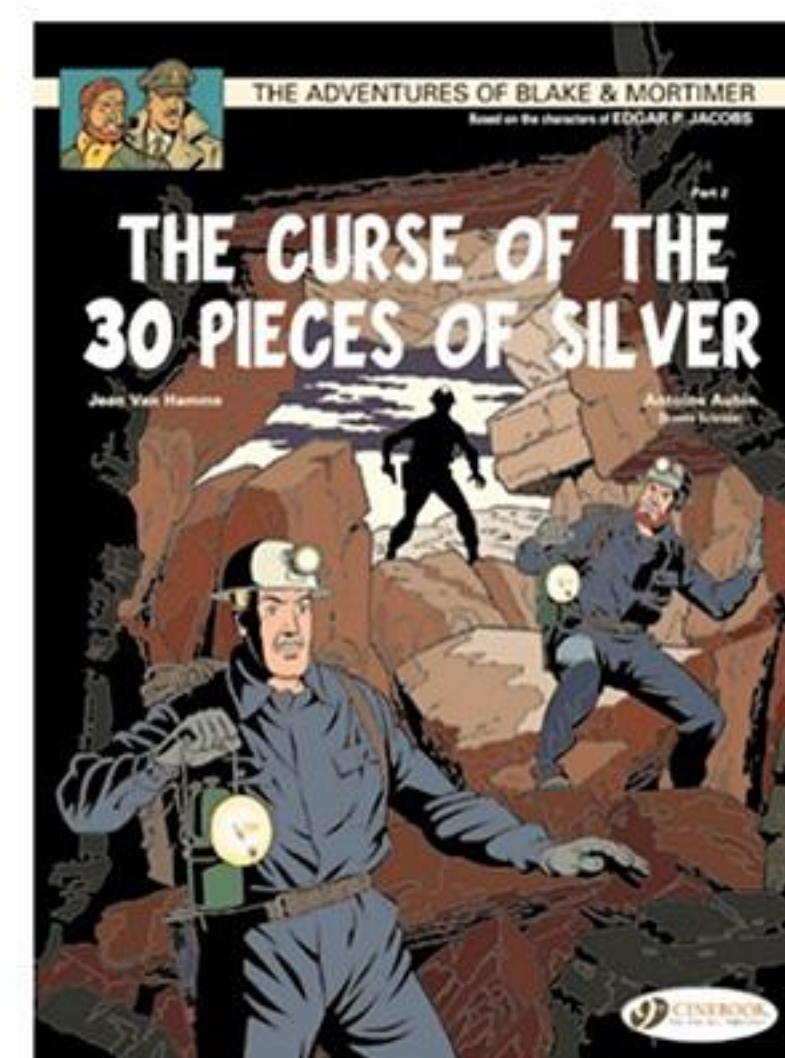
11-The Gondwana Shrine
SENTE - JUILLARD



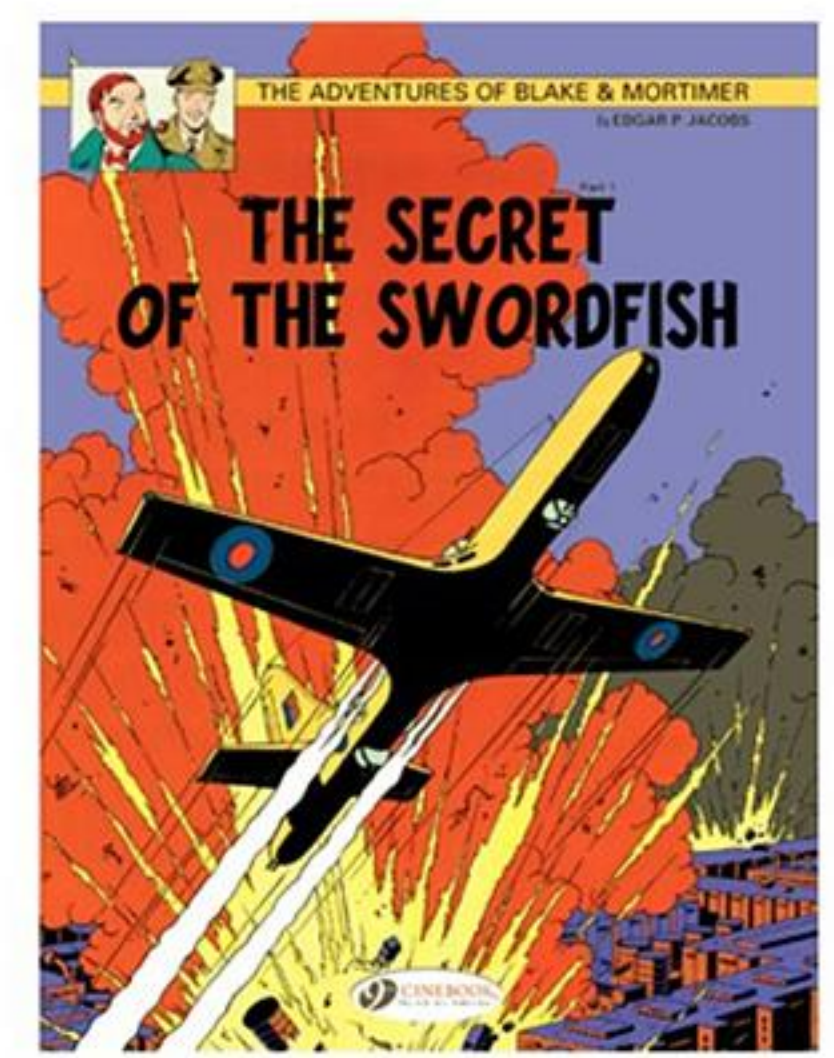
12-Atlantis Mystery
EDGAR P. JACOBS



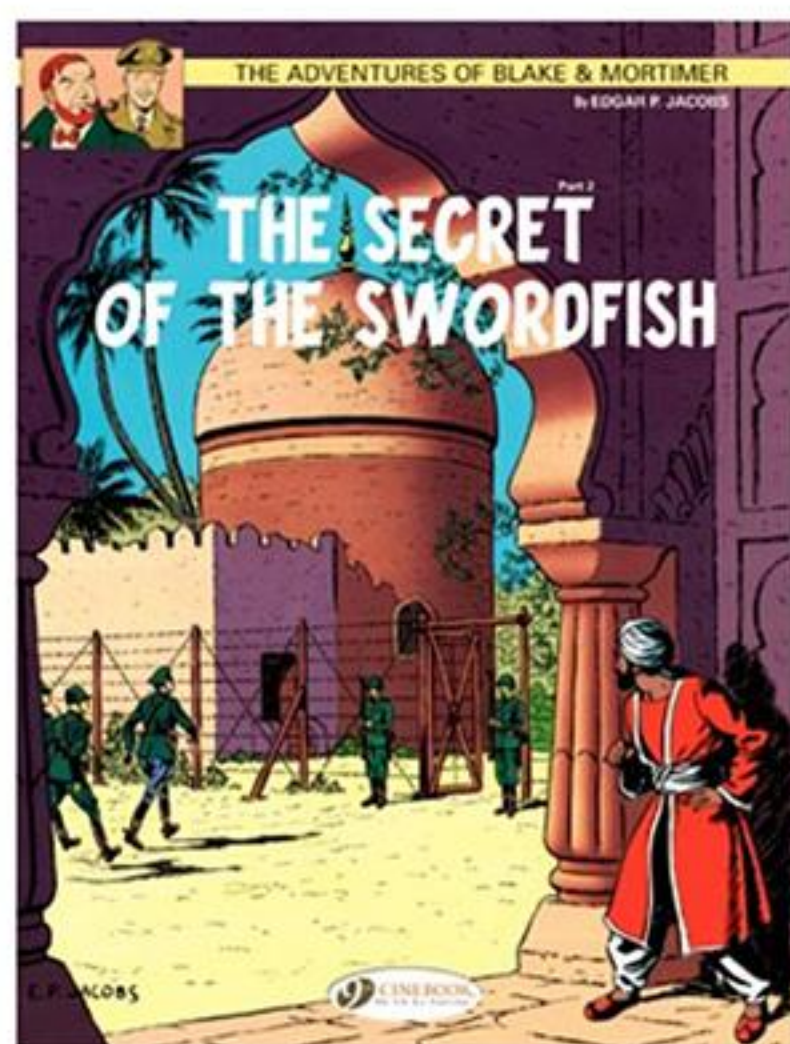
13-The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver Part 1
VAN HAMME - STERNE - DE SPIEGELEER



14-The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver Part 2
VAN HAMME - AUBIN - SCHRÉDER



15-The Secret of the Swordfish Part 1
EDGAR P. JACOBS



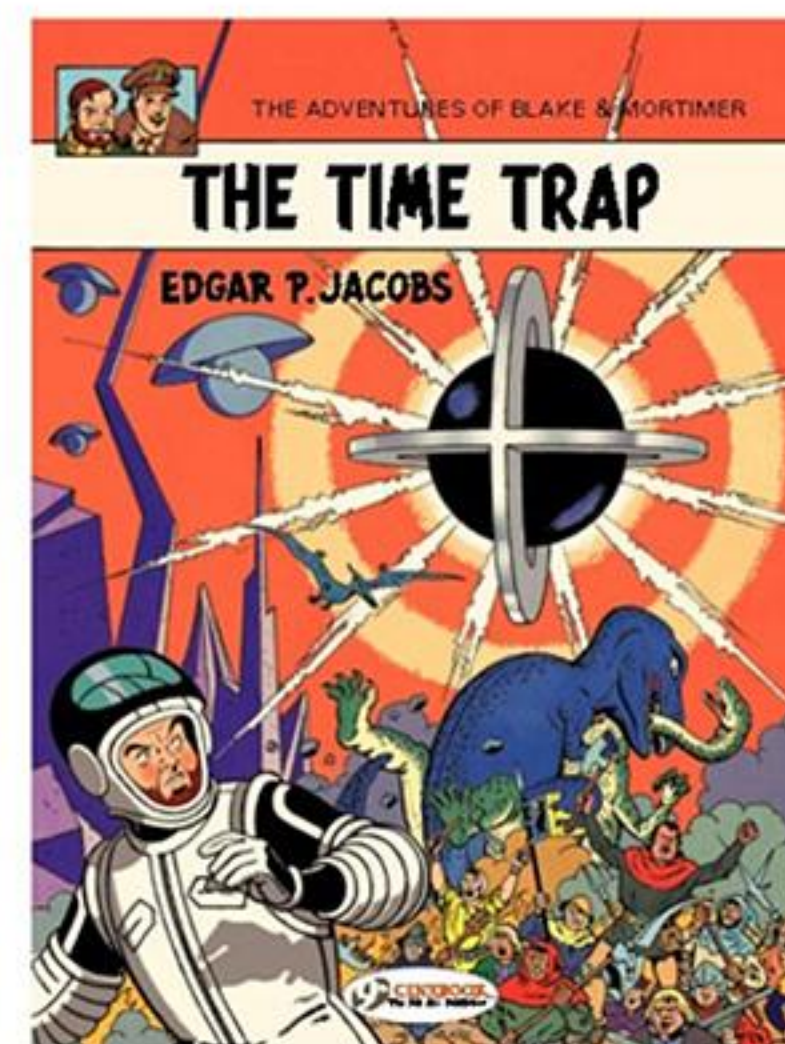
16-The Secret of the Swordfish Part 2
EDGAR P. JACOBS



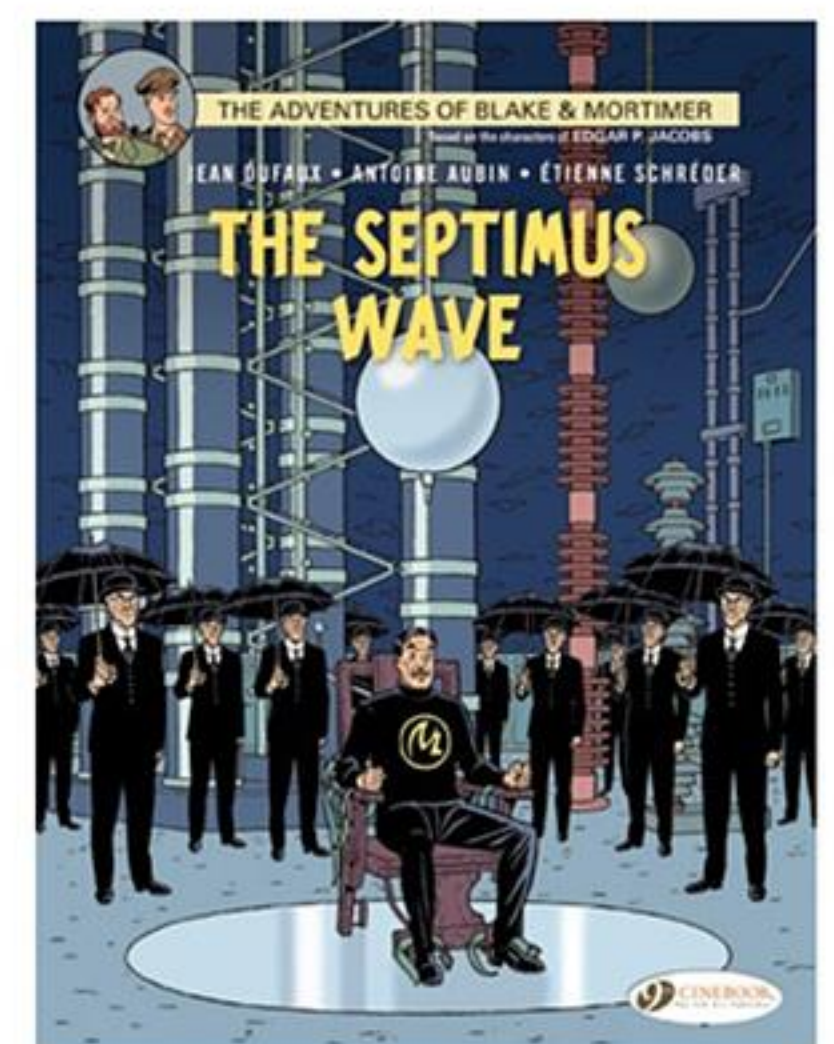
17-The Secret of the Swordfish Part 3
EDGAR P. JACOBS



18-The Oath of the Five Lords
SENTE - JUILLARD

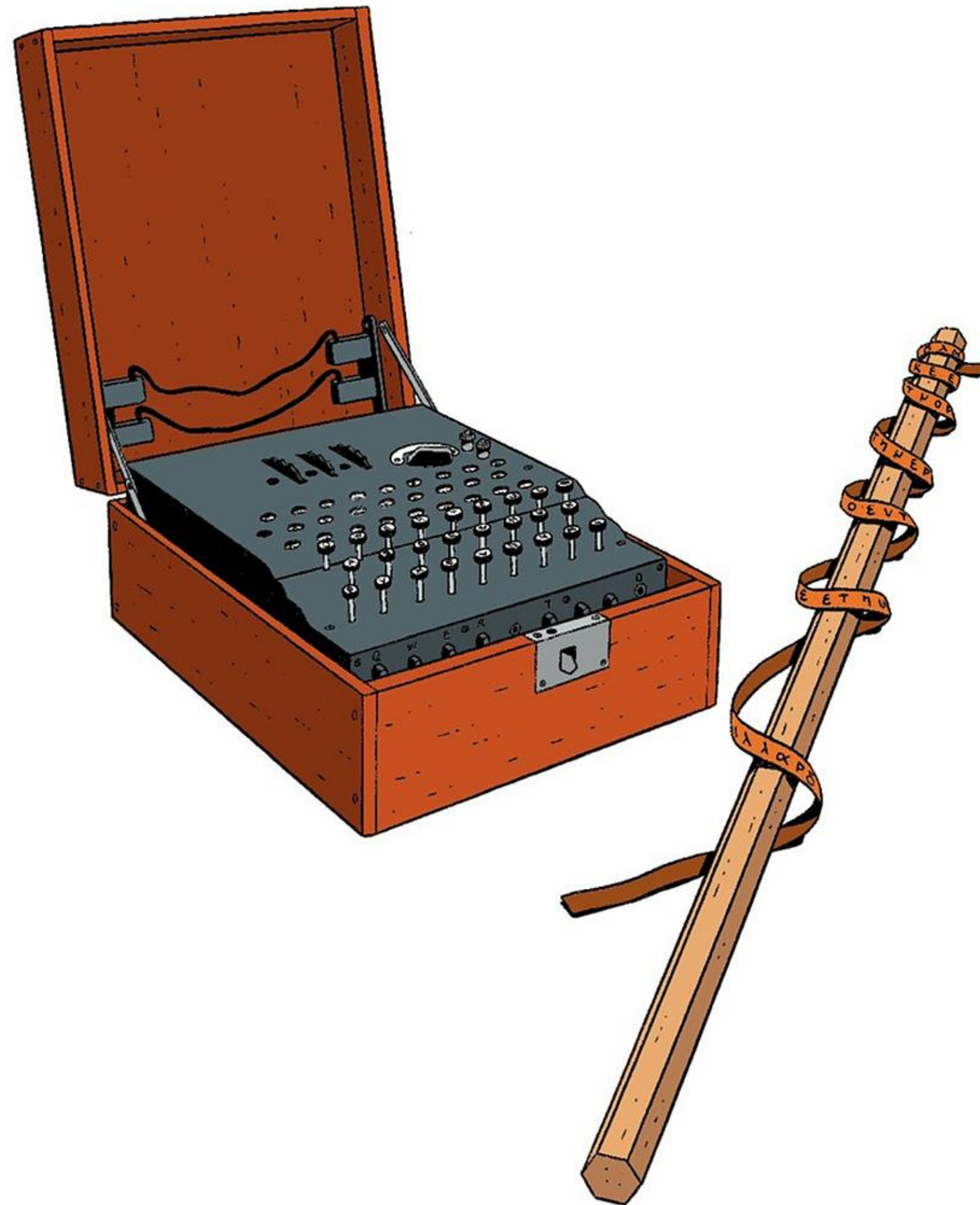


19-The Time Trap
EDGAR P. JACOBS



20-The Septimus Wave
DUFAUX - AUBIN - SCHRÉDER

**BLAKE AND MORTIMER MUST HELP END A WAR ...
TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT ONE.
OUR TWO HEROES' FIRST MISSION TOGETHER.**



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ANDRÉ JUILLARD

PLUTARCH'S STAFF

September 2015

**TRANSLATED
FOR THE FIRST TIME INTO ENGLISH**

PUBLISHED BY



YVES SENTE



THE ADVENTURES OF BLAKE & MORTIMER

Based on the characters of EDGAR P. JACOBS

YVES SENTÉ • ANDRÉ JUILLARD

PLUTARCH'S STAFF



Edgard Félix Pierre Jacobs (1904–1987), better known under his pen name Edgar P. Jacobs, was a comic book creator (writer and artist), born in Brussels, Belgium. It has been said of Jacobs that he didn't remember a time when he hadn't drawn.

Jacobs assisted fellow Belgian Hergé (Georges Prosper Remi) in the recasting of Hergé's *Tintin in the Congo*, *Tintin in America*, *King Ottokar's Sceptre* and *The Blue Lotus* for book publication. He also contributed directly to both the drawing and storylines for the Tintin double-albums *The Secret of the Unicorn/Red Rackham's Treasure* and *The Seven Crystal Balls/Prisoners of the Sun*.

When the comics magazine Tintin was launched on 26th September 1946, it included Jacobs' story *Le secret de l'Espadon* (*The Secret of the Swordfish*). This story would be the first in the Blake and Mortimer series.

The characters of Captain Francis Blake, dashing head of MI5, his friend Professor Philip Mortimer, a nuclear physicist, and their sworn enemy Colonel Olrik became legendary heroes of the 9th art in the long-running series.

After Jacobs' death in 1987, Bob de Moor completed his unfinished last story. In the mid-1990s, the series was continued by the Jacobs Studios with new teams of writers and artists.



ORIGINAL FRENCH EDITION		
1	1950	Le secret de l'Espadon, T1
2	1953	Le secret de l'Espadon, T2
3	1953	Le secret de l'Espadon, T3
4	1954	Le mystère de la Grande Pyramide, T1
5	1955	Le mystère de la Grande Pyramide, T2
6	1956	La marque Jaune
7	1957	L'énigme de l'Atlantide
8	1959	S.O.S. Météores
9	1962	Le piège diabolique
10	1967	L'affaire du collier
11	1971	Les trois formules du professeur Satō, T1
12	1990	Les trois formules du professeur Satō, T2 (Jacobs/De Moor)
13	1996	L'affaire Francis Blake (Van Hamme/Benoit)
14	2000	La machination Voronov (Sente/Juillard)
15	2001	L'étrange rendez-vous (Van Hamme/Benoit)
16	2003	Les sarcophages du Sixième Continent, T1 (Sente/Juillard)
17	2004	Les sarcophages du Sixième Continent, T2 (Sente/Juillard)
18	2008	Le sanctuaire du Gondwana (Sente/Juillard)
19	2009	La malédiction des 30 deniers, T1 (Van Hamme/Sterne/De Spiegeleer)
20	2010	La malédiction des 30 deniers, T2 (Van Hamme/Aubin)
21	2012	Le serment des cinq Lords (Sente/Juillard)
22	2013	L'onde Septimus (Dufaux/Aubin/Schröder)
23	2014	Le bâton de Plutarque (Sente/Juillard)

CINEBOOK EDITION		
15	2013	The Secret of the Swordfish, Part 1
16	2013	The Secret of the Swordfish, Part 2
17	2013	The Secret of the Swordfish, Part 3
2	2007	The Mystery of the Great Pyramid, Part 1
3	2008	The Mystery of the Great Pyramid, Part 2
1	2007	The Yellow "M"
12	2012	Atlantis Mystery
6	2009	S.O.S. Meteors
19	2014	The Time Trap
7	2010	The Affair of the Necklace
		Professor Satō's Three Formulas, Part 1
		Professor Satō's Three Formulas, Part 2
4	2008	The Francis Blake Affair
8	2010	The Voronov Plot
5	2009	The Strange Encounter
9	2011	The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent, Part 1
10	2011	The Sarcophagi of the Sixth Continent, Part 2
11	2011	The Gondwana Shrine
13	2012	The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver, Part 1
14	2012	The Curse of the 30 Pieces of Silver, Part 2
18	2014	The Oath of the Five Lords
20	2015	The Septimus Wave
21	2015	Plutarch's Staff

IT WASN'T EASY...

My thanks to E.P. Jacobs for bringing such delight to my childhood. Diving back into his world, into that Fifties nostalgia, I happened upon a BBC television series, *The Quatermass Experiment*, the first episode of which was shown on 18 July 1953. A series successfully turned into feature-length movies by Hammer Film Productions. From there was born Orpheus and its strange pilot.

Readers will also find in this book a homage to Magritte, just so we don't forget the Belgian roots (that mix of science and fantasy) of the *Adventures of Blake & Mortimer*.

And no, there is no moralistic discourse at the end of this story.
Just a cry: SANCTUARY!

JEAN DUFAUX

Etienne Schréder would like to give special thanks to José-Luis Munuera for his help.

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by Jean Dufaux, Antoine Aubin & Etienne Schréder

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